

Focus

Mary of Magdala Celebrations Lift Up the Role of Women in the Preaching Ministry of the Church

Women have been called to interpret and proclaim the word of God in every age.

Mary of Magdala is rightfully understood to be the “apostle to the apostles,” the first to proclaim the Good News of Jesus’ Resurrection and a prominent early Christian woman leader whose prophetic proclamations helped foster the Jesus movement and later Christian communities as they emerged in all their diversity. In short, Mary of Magdala preached the Good News. In fact, just last year Pope Francis elevated the liturgical celebration of Mary of Magdala from a “memorial” to a “feast,” citing this woman’s unique role as *Apostolorum Apostola*.

Mary of Magdala, however, is not alone. While certainly unique, she is only one woman in a long line of women who came before and after to preach and proclaim God’s word. In the Hebrew Scriptures, there’s Miriam, prophet and leader among the Israelites (Exodus); Deborah, a judge (a pre-monarchical leader of Israel) and prophet (Judges); and Huldah, a seventh century BCE prophet on whom high priests and royals relied



(2 Kings, 2 Chronicles). In the Gospels there is Mary of Nazareth and her Magnificat (Luke); Anna, a prophet who “spoke about the child [Jesus] to all” after Jesus’ presentation in the temple (Luke 2:37); and the Samaritan woman of John’s gospel whose fellow Samaritans “believed in Jesus on the strength of her testimony” (John 4). And of course there are the numerous women named by Paul as leaders and partners in spreading the gospel. Throughout history, countless women have proclaimed the Good News: Catherine of Siena, Hildegard of Bingen, Rose of Viterbo, The Beguines, and Thea Bowman to name just a few.

Undoubtedly, women have been preaching the good news of God since the beginning. Yet Catholics rarely hear the stories of these women. It is even less likely that they’re invited to

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Catholics Begin New Conversations about Women Deacons with DeaconChat

Three organizations—FutureChurch, the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests, and Voice of the Faithful—launched a new initiative in May 2017 to foster education and conversation on women deacons.

DeaconChat (www.catholicwomendeacons.org/support/deaconchat) brings Catholics—both lay and ordained—into dialogue.

On May 12, 2016, Pope Francis, responding to a question posed by members of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), said that he would establish a commission to study the question of ordaining women deacons in the Roman Catholic Church. That commission was formally announced in August and began its work in November of 2016.

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From the Director's Desk

What breaks your heart? What gives you hope?

My guess is that most of you reading this have experienced the heartbreak of being part of the Catholic community.

Our hearts break when we witness our sisters and brothers being shunned and shamed when they seek to be part of our parish communities. Think of Bishop Thomas Paprocki's harmful decree excluding our LGBT sisters and brothers from Catholic funerals.

Our hearts break when we learn that another child has been sexually abused by a priest, or worse, there has been another cover-up by bishops. Think of the charges against Cardinal George Pell.

Our hearts break when parishes are closed and churches are sold, especially in struggling neighborhoods where, instead of the parish building community, the closing of a parish can contribute to the decay of the community.

Our hearts break when the gifts and the talents of another woman are lost because there is no room for her in ordained ministry or governance. Think of a woman you know who has struggled to fulfill her vocational call in an institution that is still mired in patriarchy.

Our hearts are broken. And that is our entry point for healing the pain we see in the eyes of our sisters and brothers.

Then there is the joy of witnessing our sisters and brothers heal one another and call for greater justice within the Church.

Hundreds of Catholics took part in a FutureChurch action and sent messages to Bishop Paprocki urging him to rescind his harmful decree. Catholics reform organizations condemned his action. And Women Church Convergence sent a message to the Catholics who were targeted by his action, sending a message of love and healing.

Catholics have spent decades advocating for new standards for taking action against priests and bishops who abuse children or cover up when abuse has occurred. Some, like Marie Collins, have refused to be silent in the face of obstruction, even at the highest levels.

Catholics in New York and beyond are taking their responsibilities seriously as they work to keep their parish communities open. Some, like those in Denver, are creatively calling attention to the poor pastoral leadership and management skills of bishops who close vibrant parish communities.

Catholics from the United States and around the world are downloading DeaconChat, a new initiative by FutureChurch, Voice of the Faithful, and the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests that provides resources for starting new conversations about women deacons between Catholics and their priests and bishops. Hundreds of Catholics have already downloaded the resources and are starting a new dialogue. Further, Catholics are also asking their cardinals to support newly appointed Cardinal Anders Arborelius' suggestion that Pope Francis create a new College of Women to advise him on how to open more doors for women's leadership and ministry.



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Focus

on FutureChurch

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FOCUS is a semiannual publication of FutureChurch, a national organization of parish centered Catholics working for full participation of all Catholics in the life of the Church. The newsletter features information and commentary related to the mission of FutureChurch and reports on Church reform issues not prominently covered elsewhere.

No advertisements are accepted, though letters to the editor are always welcome. FutureChurch is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Parts of this publication may be reprinted after obtaining written permission from FutureChurch.

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Tens of thousands of Catholics work every day to bring the justice, peace, and mercy of the Gospel to the world and to the institutional Church wherever it is lacking. Like St. Mary

of Magdala—the apostle we just celebrated—there are women and men who are leading us, inspiring us, and challenging us to take up our role in the great project of justice, peace, and love

that belongs to our God and that She has placed deeply in our hearts.

DEBORAH ROSE-MILAVEC
Executive Director

From the Program Director



It's been another busy and productive year for FutureChurch and our members! We've accomplished so much together since I wrote to all of you last summer.

On All Saints Day last year, we launched a ground-breaking website, Catholic Women Preach,

which provides video and text of women preaching for each Sunday of the year and some feast days. It's been absolutely exciting to watch the audience for these amazing preachers continue to grow month after month. To date, Catholic Women Preach videos have been viewed over 70,000 times!

Our work to advocate for the restoration of women deacons continues. Last November, we started our 100 Women Deacons campaign on CatholicWomenDeacons.org. This unique effort lifts up the names, images, and stories of women in today's Church who have discerned or are willing to discern a call to the diaconate should the practice of ordaining women deacons be restored. To date 35 women have stepped forward to give witness to God's call in their lives. I encourage you to read and share their stories, which can be found at www.catholicwomendeacons.org/100.

On February 16, 2017 we partnered with the Ignatian Spiritual Life Center in San Francisco to host a prayer service for the study commission on the women's diaconate. Communities from South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States gathered together and actively participated in the prayer service livestream, which was presented on the Catholic Women Deacons Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CatholicWomenDeacons>). The text of the prayer service, worship aids, prayer cards, and the recording of the prayer service can all be found on the Ignatian Spiritual Life Center's website at: <http://www.ignatianspirituallifecenter.org/women-deacon-series.html>.

In June, we teamed up with the Association of United States Catholic Priests (AUSCP) and Voice of the Faithful to launch another grassroots campaign, DeaconChat, which provides lay Catholics with the resources they need to engage their local clergy members in a friendly conversation on the history of and present need for ordaining women deacons in the Roman Church. More than 150 Catholics have

downloaded the materials and begun the conversation! You can join them by going to <http://catholicwomendeacons.org/support/deaconchat> and downloading your own packet today.

All of this is on top of the day-to-day work we do together of promoting optional celibacy, lifting up women leaders in the early and today's Church, working for justice in the Church, and helping to save our parish communities!

But, there's still more to come! I'm excited to tell you a little bit about two new projects that we have been working on that will come to fruition in the next few months.

The first is Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life. Starting this September, we will host a teleconference series over the course of several months during which experts will explore the innovative models offering hope and promise for a way of being and doing Church that provides all Roman Catholics with the opportunity to participate fully in Church life and leadership. These teleconferences will lay the groundwork for a new resource of the same name that will help communities as they minister to Catholics in the 21st Century. You can sign up to get more information and updates at <https://futurechurch.org/models>. Rest assured that we will continue to promote optional celibacy for priests and the ordination of women deacons even as we promote these new and emerging models.

The second project is a new website that will track the number of women working in the Vatican. As you can imagine, the Vatican is a large, complicated, and confusing bureaucracy (likely by design!). But with the help of Annie Burns, our terrific intern from last summer, we have been able to build a comprehensive database that contains valuable information on who works where inside the Vatican. We are in the midst of designing an attractive, easy-to-navigate, and informative website that we hope will be a resource for researchers, academics, and Church renewal and reform activists alike. There is currently no set launch date, so keep an eye on our website and your email for updates and announcements.

Thank you for all you do as members and supporters of FutureChurch. We couldn't do all of these wonderful things if we didn't do it together!

RUSS PETRUS
Program Director

New York and Hartford Parishioners Persist with Parish Appeals

Archdiocese of New York

On June 30, Cardinal Dolan of the Archdiocese of New York issued decrees ordering 18 churches to be reduced to profane or secular use so that they could be sold. Each is estimated to bring millions of dollars into Archdiocesan coffers. This was the second of two canonical decrees that the cardinal was required to issue before he could sell Archdiocesan churches. The first decree dissolves the parish as a corporate entity, often requiring it to merge with another parish. This process began on November 2, 2014. The second decree, issued on June 30, 2017, relegates the church to secular use, meaning that sacred functions may no longer be conducted there. Thus, parishioners who disagree with diocesan decisions to close their vibrant, solvent parishes have two opportunities to appeal.

At press time, it appears that two parishes—St. Elizabeth of Hungary and All Saints—have appealed the decrees relegating their churches to profane use. Canon lawyer, Sr. Kate Kuenstler is helping parishioners with their appeals. Cardinal Dolan has 30 days to respond. St. Elizabeth serves a large, tightly knit deaf community that fears losing the uniquely supportive environment they now cherish. Since both churches are on a new subway line, and new high-rise buildings are planned for the neighborhood, the church lands will bring literally tens of millions of dollars to the Archdiocese.

At least two New York parishes, St. Elizabeth of Hungary and Our Lady of Peace have appeals pending at the Apostolic Signatura, the Vatican's highest court. These appeals opposed Cardinal Dolan's first decree of November 2, 2014, to merge their

parishes. Our Lady of Peace did not receive a second decree reducing the church to secular use, but surprisingly, Cardinal Dolan did issue a second decree to St. Elizabeth of Hungary despite its pending appeal at the Signatura. If the lower court at the Congregation of the Clergy upholds Dolan's relegation of St. Elizabeth's to secular use before the first merger decree is ruled on, the cardinal risks having to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes for what is now secular property.



In the meantime, FutureChurch received this heartwarming email from a Staten Island parishioner who was grateful for the help she received in working out a solution despite the merger:

St. Roch's Church Staten Island, NY and St Adalbert's also Staten Island, remain open and were merged both with weekly masses to be reviewed in three years. Thanks to you, Sister Kate, our administrator Fr. Jim, divine miraculous intervention and great team of parishioners who did everything you advised. It was time consuming, draining and uncertain but worth it. Thanks again for your professional instruction and guidance. You were the only one who cared. Cardinal Dolan offered nothing, we never heard from him one time. God bless you and Sister Kate for what you do. Keep up the great work.

Archdiocese of Hartford

On May 7, the Archdiocese of Hartford announced plans to close 40 percent of its 212 parishes so that by June 29, just 127 parishes remain. Twenty-six parishes closed outright and 59 are merging with other parishes. Approximately five parishes have appealed to Bishop Blair to reverse the decrees to merge their parishes. At press time, they are still awaiting his reply. A poignant letter to the Hartford Register from St. Joan of Arc parishioner, John Tranquilli, blames the

failure of the institutional church to address the priest shortage for closing his parish. Noting that a year ago the Archdiocese removed their priest and reduced weekly Masses from eight to six, Tranquilli writes:

St. Joan of Arc, which has been around for 47 years, was a self-sufficient parish. We had no loans, paid for over \$500,000 in renovations to the church, rectory, driveway and parish

center over the past seven years — all with donations, no loans or help from the Archdiocese. We were one of the leaders (percentage wise) in donations for the Archbishops Annual Appeal each year, and made all required payments to the Archdiocese. We also had very active ministries — Knights of Columbus, CYO, CCD, etc. The only — only — obligation the Archdiocese had was to give us a priest — and they could not complete their one obligation. . . . <http://www.nhregister.com/opinion/20170704/letter-to-the-editor-the-failure-of-the-archdiocese-of-hartford>

Over the past six months Catholics from thirteen dioceses across the U.S. and four dioceses in England have downloaded free Save Our Parish Community resources from the FutureChurch website.

The Future “Practicing” Catholic

How Younger Catholics Understand Their Catholicity & What It Means for the Catholic Institutions and Communities in the Future *by Russ Petrus*



Take a moment to conjure up your image of a “practicing” Catholic. What does she or he look like? What makes her or him a so-called “practicing” Catholic?

FutureChurch recently hosted a teleconference entitled, “Millennials Speak for Themselves: Church, Community, and Catholicity.” Three Catholics of the millennial generation Annie Burns, Michelle Maddex, and FutureChurch program director Russ Petrus presented their understanding of what makes them Catholic and shared their hopes for the Catholic community in the future. (You can download the conversation at <https://futurechurch.org/podcasts>). Chances are, each of these young Catholics described a “practicing” Catholic that looks quite different from the image that you conjured up in your head.

Born between 1981 and 1997, Catholic Millennials are now young adults and they represent the Church’s future both as leaders and as church-goers. They are the future “practicing Catholic.” So it’s no wonder that millennials have been on everyone’s minds the last several years. Type “Millennials” as a search term in any of the major Catholic news websites and up will pop a vast collection of articles, editorials, and blog posts commenting on the latest sociological research you can read through. Many of them offer ideas to help keep Millennials from “leaving” the Church or to “bring them back.” The Leadership Conference of Women Religious asked Jamie Manson to participate on a panel at their 2012 Assembly to speak to the experience of young lay women and how congregations of women religious might more fully embrace them. And in January of 2017, Pope Francis wrote a letter to

young people announcing “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment” as the theme for the October 2018 Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

Indeed, much has been written and said about Millennial Catholics. FutureChurch envisioned “Millennials Speak for Themselves” as a space of encounter between millennial Catholics and their predecessors, offering older Catholics the opportunity to hear from younger Catholics directly. So what do future “practicing Catholics” look like and what does it mean for Catholic institutions and communities? Several themes emerged as the conversation unfolded.

Their relationship with Jesus.

All three of the young Catholics on the panel described a relationship with Jesus that is rooted in the Jesus of the Gospels. Speaking about what she desires in her faith life, Burns said, “each of my desires is, at its root, pointed toward the desire to follow Jesus: to live and love as Jesus did.” Maddex said that she “felt the closest to God [she] had ever felt in [her life]” when she was connected to the suffering of the Salvadoran people. She continued, “Jesus showed us the way of living out a preferential option for the poor.” Petrus summed up his relationship with Jesus this way, “I believe [our] relationship is with Jesus as ‘liberator’ or ‘radical’... This Jesus is both beyond us but also in our very midst in the lives and stories of the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable, and at once loves us and constantly calls us to conversion.”

For these millennial Catholics, their relationship with Jesus is the foundation of their hopes and dreams, their challenges, and their expectations for themselves and for the Church.

Their Sacramental World View and Spirituality.

Because of their relationship with Jesus these young Catholics all described a sacramentality and spirituality that isn’t confined inside walls of a church building, but is lived out in the world: “the hours spent outside of a chapel,” as Burns put it. “I find God both in the throng of trees in nature and in the forest of people making their way down Michigan Avenue. I experience the sacramental both in the breaking of the bread at mass, and in the breaking of hotdogs with those who might otherwise go hungry,” she says. For Maddex, each decision she makes in her life is a practice of spirituality: “I try to live out my Catholic identity by constantly orienting and reorienting myself towards Gospel values and choosing a different way of life than the normative in our culture of individualism

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and capitalism. I try to make decisions with an awareness of how they affect so many people other than myself – decisions about what I eat, how I respond to people I see in the street, and where I live.” Burns echoes this Catholic intentionality, “I also desire to live simply. I desire to live with intention.”

This doesn’t mean, however, that the Eucharist, the other Sacraments, and traditional Catholic prayers are out of the equation for these young Catholics. “I can pray both in Latin and liturgical dance,” says Burns. Petrus agrees, “For us, being a practicing Catholic is so much more than [going to Mass on a weekly basis]...being a practicing Catholic...can also mean having great conversations informed by faith about the important questions of our time, or engaging in the work of justice, or sharing a meal with others.”

Their sacramental world view and spirituality compels them out of the church building and into the streets, the global south, the neighborhood plagued by poverty and oppression and back into the communities they are a part of.

The community they are looking for.

All three recognize that living out their faith in these ways is a daunting and often isolating endeavor. And so they long for a community of disciples to be a part of. “It is important for me to be connected to others who are also committed to these values to provide me with nourishment and accountability...communities of faith where we can pray together, break bread together and connect our daily reality and the suffering of the world to the Gospel, learning together, how to live out the Gospel in today’s context,” says Maddex.

For each of these young Catholics, being a part of a community

who shares their commitment to justice also means being a part of communities—faith-based and otherwise—that actively seek to call themselves to account, to open their doors to all, and to right the past wrongs that they have committed. For Burns learning to both love and critique her community is a part of being Catholic, “In college I was blessed to be surrounded by communities who were willing to critique structures that perpetuate injustice...these bright, hope-filled companions of mine taught me that you can both love and critique those institutions...These humans are some of the best Catholics I know, even as they aren’t the most consistent mass-goers.” Maddex, also describes the tension, “As I have fallen in love with this Church I have also felt the pain of the way it is too often exclusive and not fully living out the Gospel values that Jesus proclaimed.... I find myself sitting in Mass in tears, praying that the Church may become more inclusive and made strides toward gender justice.” All three specifically named the way the Church has excluded or “othered”—in Petrus’ words—women and the LGBTQ community. Each expressed the longing to be embraced by a community where they could be safe to be who they are—“to be both sinner and beloved...both imperfect and worthy (Burns)—” knowing that they as individuals and as a generation have much to offer as the Church seeks to fully cooperate in the building of God’s kingdom.

How can we respond?

As Church leaders and religious communities continue to ponder questions like “where are the young people” or “what does our future look like” they would do well to reflect on the words and witnesses of these faith-filled young Catholics.

How can these leaders begin to work with these young people to create communities of faith that place Jesus of the Gospel and social justice values at the center? How can they work with young people to develop communities that foster and support expansive spiritual practices that lead to a faith that does justice? What can they learn from young people about both trusting and loving their institutions while critiquing them and calling them to conversion.

As these young people come of age they continue to defy the grim picture that sociologists and commentators painted early on. “Generation me” has turned into “generation WE” and a generation of “trophy kids” who earned awards for simply participating are now adults who “take it at face value that each person is created in God’s own image and likeness” (Petrus). After all, millennials are the generation raised on the question, “What would Jesus do (WWJD)?” and—according to Petrus—“took it seriously.” And it may look different from the image that came to mind when you were asked to consider a “practicing” Catholic, but these young Catholics are certainly forging a future of what it means to “practice” Catholic.

As FutureChurch continues its work to make changes that will empower all Catholics to participate fully in Church life and leadership, we are developing resources for a new initiative “Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life.” And as we develop this collection of essays, podcasts, testimonies and other resources, it will be with an eye toward answering the question “what is the future of ‘practicing’ Catholic.”

Mary of Magdala Celebrations continued from page 1

consider them in the preaching ministry of the Church or as preachers.

This year's Mary of Magdala Celebrations—"Go and Tell my Sisters and Brothers: A Celebration of Women Preachers"—sought to change that, lifting up these women and so many more as preachers and proclaimers. Moreover, the celebrations invited participants to take up their own role as preachers and proclaimers.

The prayer service began with a Liturgy of the Word—"A Chorus of Voices"—which offered readings from both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures focusing on women preaching throughout Salvation History, culminating in the Gospel Proclamation of Mary of Magdala's encounter with the Risen Christ and his commissioning her to "Go and Tell" the apostles.

The Women of the Word litany asked women preachers throughout Scripture and history to "stand and pray with us" that the Holy Spirit would gift and empower each participant to take up her or his rightful place in the preaching mission of the Church. Turning and blessing one another, participants then called upon the Holy Spirit, asking Her to bless their neighbor with the traditional Gifts so that they might "Go and Tell."

About 250 celebrations on or around Mary of Magdala's July 22 feast day were planned using FutureChurch

resources this year. In the United States, celebrations were held in 32 states and in Washington, D.C. Internationally, there were 34 celebrations in Australia, Canada, England, France, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, and Poland. While most communities used the theme "Go and Tell My Sisters and Brothers: Celebrating Women Preachers," some communities who were celebrating Mary of Magdala for the first time downloaded older resources as a way of introducing their congregation to the true story of Mary of Magdala.

FutureChurch hosted its annual celebration on July 20 at River's Edge in Cleveland. Local pastoral minister Lisa Frey presided and preached. Lisa, a long-time member and former Board Member of FutureChurch received her Doctor of Ministry in preaching in 2016 from the Aquinas Institute of Theology in Saint Louis, Missouri. Reflecting on the "dangerous memory" of these women, she urged those in attendance to take up their rightful role in the preaching ministry of the Church: "It might feel dangerous. We might feel afraid that no one will listen or believe. But when each word is offered in love and in truth, there is an authority no one can dispute. So 'Go and Tell.' Preach on, sisters and brothers." Lisa's preaching can be found on on the Catholic Women Preach YouTube page and at this link: <http://bit.ly/2v1MNYq>

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FutureChurch has been educating and advocating for the restoration of women deacons for nearly fifteen years. In that time, Catholics from the U.S. and around the world have spoken to their bishops in person and sent over 20,000 postcards and signatures to Rome advancing this cause. One thing is sure: the creation of Pope Francis' commission is a direct result of grassroots actions by Catholics.

In 2013, the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests (AUSCP) called for consideration of ordaining women deacons. Fr. Bob Bonnot, Chair of the AUSCP, believes that as the papal commission continues its work, it is important that Catholics—lay and ordained—undergo their own study and discernment of the history and present possibility of ordaining women to the diaconate.

Voice of the Faithful has long advocated for increasing women's participation in the Church. Their first publication on women deacons came out in 2012 at their 10th Year Conference. They also awarded their St. Catherine of Siena Layperson Award to Phyllis Zagano for her work on women deacons. Donna B. Doucette, Executive Director of Voice of the Faithful says DeaconChat is

designed to foster educational efforts and to enrich dialogue on women deacons through its three important components: learning, sharing, and connecting.

Already, hundreds of Catholics from the United States and around the world are downloading this resource and beginning conversations in their area. Learn more about DeaconChat by going to FutureChurch's website, CatholicWomenDeacons.org, and downloading these high quality educational materials. You will also find a link to purchase Phyllis Zagano's book *Women Deacons: Past, Present and Future*, as well as guides for inviting clergy to dialogue.

Thank you for all you do to make the restoration of women deacons a reality in our day!

Reflection on My First Homily by Luke Hansen, S.J.



My first homily as a priest took place on Pentecost. What a gift!

As I began preparing it, I felt a lot of fear. Many family members and friends with diverse religious and political views would be present, and I would be preaching to a parish

community that I did not know well. I was a brand new priest and afraid of the unknown.

In the Gospel reading for Pentecost, the disciples are afraid and locked in the Upper Room. Jesus comes and stands among them and says, "Peace be with you." In order to preach well, I knew I needed to go to the Upper Room in my prayer, name my fears and ask Jesus to enter the room and come close to me. I prayed again and again, "Come, Holy Spirit." I knew I needed the help of the Spirit to preach about the Spirit. I heard Jesus say, "Be not afraid. Take courage."

My spiritual director has encouraged me to ask God directly, "What do you want to communicate to the people today?" I had a sense that God wanted to say to each person in the church that they have a gift that the church needs, and also that Jesus wants to come close and touch and heal those parts of ourselves, our society, and our church that are afraid and locked up. So that was the heart of my homily.

I received the gift of the Spirit. I felt peaceful and passionate as I delivered it. And the response has been overwhelming. The reference to the Disney film "Moana" resonated with adults and kids alike. People said they felt moved, less afraid, and more hopeful, especially for the church. I learned to rely on the Spirit and be open to the Spirit working through my preaching.

HOMILY

Women deacons, Disney and doors

By Luke Hansen, S.J.

June 09, 2017

I love the Disney film "Moana." I really love it. It is about fear and freedom, call and courage, hope and redemption—themes that relate to what we celebrate on Pentecost.

There is one rule on this Polynesian island: No one can go beyond the reef! The elders say it has always been the rule. The world is too dangerous. Even when things are dying on the island and the livelihood of the community is threatened, the rule still stands. It is a powerful image of a church in fear, locked in the Upper Room.

Moana, the teenage daughter of the chief, is filled with a Spirit that calls her to go beyond the reef. She has a vision that allows her to see that her people were once voyagers who sailed the length of the seas. Now that ocean is the Spirit that calls her, leads her, and supports her when she needs a lift or a push. This community was not always locked in the Upper Room. And now this voyaging could bring new life to their island.

Moana is priest and prophet and will become chief of her people.

We Christians, at heart, are voyagers. We are a pilgrim church sent to proclaim the Good News to every nation. The readings for Pentecost help us to remember it is the Spirit who enables our voyage, and we must renew ourselves in this Spirit.

In the Acts of the Apostles, the Spirit comes in wind and fire. Appropriately, on Pentecost, we process into church with fire. In the Gospel according to John, the Spirit comes in a gentle breath. Jesus breathed on his disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

This Spirit gives life and empowers wonders and signs. This Spirit is dangerous. It "blows where it wills." It cannot be contained by even the best of structures and rules. This Spirit blows open locked doors. This Spirit surprises us, dwells in us and renews us.

The Spirit cannot be contained by even the best of structures and rules.

How have you experienced and witnessed the power of the Spirit in your life?

We have all been in that locked Upper Room. We can be afraid to walk outside when there is risk and cost. To extend forgiveness to someone who hurt us. To cross racial barriers in a segregated city. To bridge cultural differences in a diverse parish.

Parts of us are afraid and behind locked doors. Parts of our society are afraid and behind locked doors. Parts of our church are afraid and behind locked doors.

But these are not barriers to the Risen Christ. A shut tomb or a shut church cannot keep Jesus out. He says: "Be not afraid. Take courage. I am with you." These parts of ourselves, our society, our church, Jesus enters to breathe the Spirit, to touch, bless, heal, renew.

Parts of us are afraid and behind locked doors. Parts of our church are afraid and behind locked doors.

The greatest privilege of my ministry as a deacon was co-teaching a course on forgiveness at a federal women's prison. We started every class by invoking the Holy Spirit, the one who gives the gift of forgiveness. We explored the fears and locked doors in our lives, when guilt, shame, or

Reflection on My First Homily



deep hurts make it so difficult to ask for forgiveness, to extend forgiveness, or to forgive oneself.

The Spirit was alive in this class. One woman spoke about forgiving the two men who murdered her son. Others received the strength to ask for forgiveness for hurting people they love, often because of an addiction. Some could not forgive, often in cases of sexual abuse by family members. I finished the course with this question: Could these women forgive us, for imprisoning them, most of them mothers now separated from their children, all women who were victims in need of healing and justice long before they committed any crime?

A shut tomb or a shut church cannot keep Jesus out.

At the final class, each woman sat in a chair, named how she is a gift and listened to others affirm her. Of everything we did in the class, it was the most challenging exercise for these women: to recognize the Spirit descending upon them, saying, "You are my beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased." The Spirit offers this gift, too, to them, and to each of us.

How have you experienced and witnessed the power of the Spirit in your life?

Our beloved church, like those disciples in the Upper Room, still experiences fear and locked doors.

The first time Pope Francis was asked about women's ordination, he responded that John Paul II said no. "That door is closed." Presumed in the question and answer was the ordination of women as priests. Three years later, at the request of women religious from around the world, Pope Francis agreed to everyone's great surprise to establish a commission to study the diaconate of women. Deacons, of course, are ordained to serve in the ministries of Word, liturgy, and charity.

Pope Francis: "We must not be afraid! Fear closes doors. Freedom opens them."

In March, Pope Francis told a German interviewer that he would stop by and visit one of the meetings of the commission. When the interviewer suggested that his presence would be seen as an encouragement, Francis responded: "The task of theology is to do research to get to the bottom of things, always.... We must not be afraid! Fear closes doors. Freedom opens them. And [even] if freedom is small, it opens at least a little window."

In the many areas of church life, where are we free—or fearful? In what places do we need greater freedom to be effective ministers of the Gospel?

In his letter to the church in Corinth, Paul says, "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for some benefit." We must take this seriously. In order to fulfill its mission, the church needs the unique gifts the Spirit has given each person. No one is excluded: man or woman or child; black, brown, or white; gay or straight or bi or transgender; clergy or lay; C.E.O. or service worker; Republican or Democrat or neither. What matters is that you are baptized priest, prophet, and king. And the church and the world need your unique gifts.

What are your unique gifts of the Spirit for the benefit of the church and the world?

At the Ordination Mass, the church pleaded, "Come, Holy Spirit." The prayer is for all of us. When we are weak, "Come, Holy Spirit." When we are lost, afraid, or divided, "Come, Holy Spirit."

In a few moments, we will call upon this Spirit to transform simple gifts of bread and wine. And to transform us. Jesus will come very close, to feed us, to free us. He will unlock doors, and he sends us to do the same.

Readings:

Acts 2:1-11; Psalm 104; 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13; John 20:19-23

Published in America Magazine: <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/06/09/women-deacons-disney-and-doors-read-what-jesuit-priest-said-his-first-homily>

Editors' note: This homily was delivered on Pentecost Sunday, June 4, 2017, at the Church of the Gesu, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Catholic Women Preach: Raising Voices, Renewing the Church



Since launching on All Saints Day in 2016, Catholic Women Preach videos have been viewed more than 70,400 times accounting for more than 250 days' worth of Catholics logging on to listen to and pray with women preaching on the

weekly readings. Week after week, viewers take to email and social media to share how much these reflections and this project mean to them. The "tag line" for Catholic Women Preach is "Raising Voices, Renewing the Church" and that's just what this project is doing.

On Facebook, one viewer commented, "These great women and their wonderfully powerful wisdom give me HOPE!" Another viewer emailed in response to a reflection on the Beatitudes by Sr. Janet Schlichting, O.P., "I'm 78 and a life-long Catholic, and your reflection on what Jesus very likely meant by His sermon on the Mount is now beginning to make sense." Priests, deacons, and seminarians also write in to share that they use the resource as a source of inspiration for their own homilies.

Young adult Catholics—an audience Catholic Women Preach has been working to reach—are also responding positively to the project. One young Catholic writes, "Thank you all for your creativity in putting together this project! As a young adult, Catholic woman, I find initiatives like this to be inspiring and helpful in my effort to remain Catholic." Young adults, age 24-34 make up approximately ten percent of the audience for Catholic Women Preach and those in the 35-44 age range account for another ten percent. What is particularly hopeful and encouraging about these age groups is that viewership between genders is evenly split at approximately 50%. Overall, the audience for Catholic Women Preach is 75% women.

For many Catholic Women Preach viewers, it is the diversity of women preachers that can't be found elsewhere that brings them back each week. They know that from week to week someone new, with a different background and perspective, will be preaching. The women who preach are both world-renowned academics and those who minister as teachers, campus ministers, and pastoral ministers in their local community. Some are vowed religious, some are married, and still others are single women. The women vary in race and age. And while many are from the United States, the website regularly features the preaching of women from around the globe—often times presenting the preaching in both English and another language. For the viewer hungering for a deeper relationship with the gospel, this means that there is always something new to learn, something new to ponder, some new perspective to consider.

It is precisely this diversity that makes Catholic Women Preach such a valuable resource, renewing the Church.

To read a selection of inspiring quotes from our women preachers and responses from viewers, see pages 14-15. And don't forget to visit www.catholicwomenpreach.org for new preaching every week!

Louise Akers, SC 2017 Trivison Award Recipient



Louise Akers, SC, has a wide, gracious smile for most everyone she meets, but she is no pushover. In fact, she is a modern day prophet who stands firm in her convictions when it comes to justice and equality for women in the Catholic Church and in the world.

In 2009, Sr. Chris Schenk, then Executive Director of FutureChurch, heard Sr. Akers speak at a Call To Action conference. She related her experience of being dismissed by Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk after refusing to refute her stand on women's ordination. Chris was so inspired by Sr. Akers' faith and sheer determination in the face of attempts by the archbishop to silence her, that Chris was inspired to develop one of FutureChurch's resources—A Million Voices. Inspired by Louise Akers' courage, Chris designed the resource to help give Catholics the confidence they need to be prophetic in the Church. The resource helps Catholics to know their rights and responsibilities and to navigate difficult conversations in a Church that has too often silenced those who faithfully dissent.

As a testament to her long life of faithful service to the Gospel, FutureChurch will name Sr. Akers the Trivison Award recipient for 2017. The award honors the spirit and life of FutureChurch co-founder Fr. Louis J. Trivison and is given to a Roman Catholic who exhibits outstanding leadership in advancing the FutureChurch mission or vision in one or more of the areas of teaching, administration, research, publication, advocacy, and pastoral service.

Aurora Priest Raises Critical Questions about the Eucharist in a Time of Fewer Priests

by Rev. James Daprille, Ph.D.



One of FutureChurch's newest board members, Fr. James Daprille, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in

Aurora, Ohio has his feet in both the academic world and the world of pastoring. In his July 16 bulletin he warns about the danger posed to the Eucharist by bishops who will not discuss alternatives to a male celibate priesthood.

[In July] I received the latest notice of new pastoral appointments in the Diocese of Youngstown* and there were a few announcements not exactly unexpected but disconcerting.

In this past year there have been 10 priest vacancies due to death, retirement or health and only 2 priesthood ordinations this past June. Additionally, the 91 parishes of the diocese are staffed by 78 priests. A number of priests have a multiple responsibilities. Of the 78 priests in active ministry, 38 priests are over the age of 65 (I fall into this category); and 17 of these men are over the age of 70. According to the Priest Personnel Policy the retirement age is 70. These figures are ominous in themselves. In the new pastoral appointments, some priests have taken on merged or dual pastorates. Priests with less than 2 years of experience are assigned to parishes as pastors.

And a new model has emerged for 2 parishes: Parish Leaders. Two pastoral leaders have been appointed (one parish is the approximate size of Our Lady), and 2 parishes still wait the naming of parish leadership, either pastor or parish leader. The diocesan Office of Evangelization and Pastoral Planning describes this role: A Parish Leader is a professional

minister appointed by the diocesan bishop with the responsibility of leading a parish community that does not have a resident priest, in collaboration with a Canonical Pastor.

The sacraments will continue to be celebrated on a regular basis at the parish through the ministry of an assigned Sacramental Minister (a priest) or the Canonical Pastor. The Parish Leader nurtures and renews the life of the parish in collaboration with staff and parishioners. A Parish Leader can be a deacon, religious woman or man, or lay woman or man who is specifically trained for this ministry.

According to Canon Law, a priest appointed by the bishop is ultimately responsible for the pastoral and administrative care of the parish. When necessary, the bishop may delegate certain day to day responsibilities to a deacon, religious, or lay person, known as a Parish Leader. The Parish Leader is responsible for the administrative, pastoral, and all other aspects of parish life in collaboration with the Canonical Pastor. Positively, Parish Leaders can empower parishioners to fulfill their baptismal call of discipleship and ministry and use their gifts at the service of the Church. This is an important development. For too long the skills, gifts and blessings of God's people have been under appreciated and often strangled by the church's hierarchy. The cooperative commitment of all the laity and clergy is necessary for the future of any church.

Adversely, I believe this pragmatic and important model, has many perils. The Second Vatican Council clearly attests that the Eucharist "is the source and summit" of the Church, of who we are as God's people. A parish / a Catholic life cannot be vital or authentic without the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. Can an

already overtaxed priesthood and diminished number of priests sustain the Eucharistic life of the American church? Will priests become "circuit riders" or "sacramental dispensers" or "occasional and impersonal hired hands"?

Perhaps and more critically, the urgent need for more priests is sidelined. The American bishops (as well as the hierarchy at large) have been loath to even discuss how the Holy Spirit can move the Church in providing more and different priests and deacons: celibate, married, male or female.

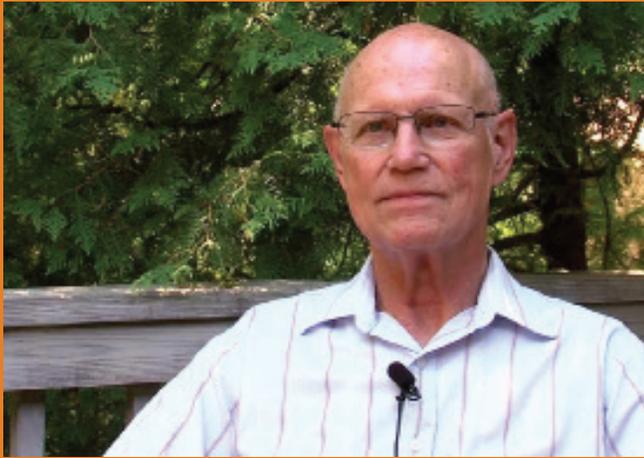
Of course we pray for vocations, but do we expect God to rubber stamp our ways or to be transformed by the Gospel? For the first thousand years of the Church (before there were schisms, divisions and the Reformation) there have been celibate and married priests, male and female deacons.

Currently there are over 120 married priests in the United States! Eastern Catholic Churches have allowed the ordination of married men as priests for centuries. Some Orthodox Churches now welcome women deacons.

Well, this is where we are. Unfortunately I see this model as a stopgap measure. But, I am a person of hope, surrounded by a Gospel-loving parish and sustained by the ever-renewing power of the Holy Spirit.

Since the printing of the July 16 bulletin, two more pastors have retired, only adding to the critical nature of the situation; 3 parishes have had parish leaders appointed, some with a canonical pastor from one parish and a sacramental priest from another; and at least 2 parishes are awaiting appointments of a pastor or parish leader.

Called to Serve by Phil Marcin, FutureChurch Board



I was baptized in 1938, ordained a priest of the Diocese of Cleveland in 1963, and married in 1982. It is a blessing to have received all seven sacraments, but an injustice to be denied the opportunity to exercise my priesthood in the Catholic Church because I married.

Our class of twenty-five was ordained during Vatican II and we were energized with the fire of the Holy Spirit to bring new life to the People of God.

My first assignment was a parish on the west side of Cleveland where our Christian Family Movement (CFM) group of open and loving parents and children was a microcosm of what a parish or church ought to be.

Next, I was sent to a wonderful racially diverse parish in Akron where I loved working with our parish family and immersed myself in social justice, interfaith activities, and local government. But I began to sense a deep loneliness.

After nine years, I was sent to be part of a fantastic team of two priests and a religious sister at a downtown parish in Akron where we were chaplains at two hospitals and initiated multiple programs to serve our parishioners and the many homeless and indigent who came to our door.

Shortly after I arrived, a young lady joined the parish. We began talking about the church and became friends. My loneliness lessened when I was with her. After five years we realized we were in love, and, because of celibacy, that beautiful and holy realization was fraught with fear and danger.

The church made celibacy mandatory in 1139 because of its desire for power, control, and patriarchy. It is a practice that can and should be changed.

My wife-to-be and I prayed and entered counseling. I wanted to be honest with the people of the parish and told them two months in advance that I was taking a leave to consider marriage. Although most were supportive, some were not.

In 1982, nineteen years after ordination, my wife and I married, and we have two wonderful sons and a daughter-in-law. I have worked in the nonprofit sector, including as a development director for a food bank and Meals on Wheels program. I used each of my jobs as an opportunity to minister to folks in need. One of the many blessings of marriage is that my wife and I cared for one another during life-threatening illnesses.

A priest is always a priest. There are ex-clerics but not ex-priests. I continue to exercise my priesthood when asked to marry couples, lead funeral services, baptize, or visit the hospital. No one is turned away. All are welcome.

I believe an inclusive priesthood of married and single men and women would be a blessing to the church. My wife and I are actively working with forward-thinking groups to encourage the church to become more open and alive with the heart of Jesus. In conscience, I could not return to exercise my priesthood within the church while it continues to exclude women and those who are married. It is my hope and prayer that this will change, but in the meantime I try to live each day fully because it is truly a gift from God.

Emerging Models

Join us this fall as experts explore the innovative models offering hope and promise for a way of being and doing Church that provides all Roman Catholics with the opportunity to participate fully in Church life and leadership.

We'll hear from members of the Association of US Catholic Priests on their efforts to renew parish structures and ministerial leadership, from experts on the Loebinger Model, and from lay ecclesial ministers who are forging new models for community life. Visit www.futurechurch.org/models

EMERGING MODELS OF PARISH AND COMMUNITY LIFE

2017-2018 SERIES

- September 13, 2017: Accounts of a Life of Service - Principles Parish
- October 23, 2017: Professor Ed Malloy - The Future of Catholic Life Today
- October 27, 2017: Fr. Robert D. White - The Loebinger Model for Parish Leadership and Ministry
- November 14, 2017: Fr. Robert D. White - The Loebinger Model for Parish Leadership and Ministry
- January 12, 2018: Joseph Mancini - The Future of Religious Life and the Next Generation
- February 7, 2018: Chris Loomis - Everyone Leads: How to Revitalize Our Catholic Church

visit www.futurechurch.org/models for more information & to sign up

Remarks to LCWR in 2012 Important Today

By Jamie L. Manson



Jamie L. Manson, well known writer for National Catholic Reporter, has been stirring the waters when it comes to the future of religious life. Religious communities are shrinking in numbers. As with ordained priests, that shrinkage will have a significant impact on the work and life of the church, a topic FutureChurch is addressing in our upcoming Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life initiative. In 2012, just before the Vatican crackdown, Manson offered some ideas about the future of religious life to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious as their annual assembly. Manson's ideas deserve a place of priority in our discussions today for her courageous and thoughtful leadership is helping birth the future of the church.

[Read her 2012 comments.](#)

For years now I have been listening with interest to the ongoing conversation about the future of religious life. I have read just about everything NCR has published on the topic in recent years, and I've talked one-on-one with a number of sisters about this urgent question. What I have often found lacking from this discussion is the same issue that seems to be missing every time the topic of declining priestly vocations arises, too. What about all of the young adults, many of whom hold degrees in theology and ministry, who have not taken vows, but are currently doing what we here would consider traditional work of the church?

Two summers ago, I had the extraordinary opportunity to study several communities of women religious who ran shelters for homeless mothers. The sisters who ran these homes were aging and were small in number. Many of them lived in the shelter with their guests. Most of them had several nonreligious staff members who served as case managers and social workers.

But as dedicated and skilled as the support staff was, I got the distinct sense that most did not quite grasp the deeper mission of the place. Their devotion to their work was not grounded in Catholic social justice tradition or sacramental theology. Watching the differences between the sisters and the clinical staff, I felt like I was looking at a mission and a charisma on the brink of extinction.

Every year, hundreds of young Catholic women graduate from universities, graduate programs in religion, divinity schools and seminaries. Many of them go on to be theologians, chaplains, nonprofit leaders, advocates, activists and social workers doing outreach with those facing poverty and homelessness, the incarcerated, victims of domestic violence and sex trafficking.

Their work is not only high risk, it is often emotionally demanding and spiritually draining. If they are very lucky, they work in a supportive environment under a supervisor who is stable, competent and compassionate. Not many have a strong, supportive community behind them. And many do not feel at home, or even safe, in a parish, given the climate in the Roman Catholic Church these days.

Unlike males who seek the priesthood, the institutional church does not support their education or their profession—even though they, too, spend their lives studying and serving the church.

Unlike women religious, they do not experience some of the securities that often come with religious life. They have to worry about paying their rent, maintaining a household on their own and, in some cases, they provide their own medical insurance. If they lose their jobs, there is no safety net to carry them through until they find work again.

But perhaps the greatest deprivation these young women face, is the sustenance that comes with a life of prayer, contemplation and community. Young women are as in need of this support as any of the sisters engaged in similar work.

The number of young adult Catholic women who find themselves in this predicament is not small. And, I believe, they are most certainly called by God in a way very similar to women religious. The difference is that these young women grew up in a culture that, in some significant ways, is radically different from the society in which the majority of sisters in the United States were raised.

continued on page 22

Excavating Evidence of Women's Authority in Early Christianity

by Christine Schenk, CSJ



I'm very happy to announce that my book *Crispina and Her Sisters: Women and Authority in Early Christianity*, will be published by Fortress Press in the late Fall.

It all began with our 2007 FutureChurch pilgrimage to Rome sites of women leaders in the early church. Dr. Janet Tulloch—a specialist in early Christian images—suggested that we visit the newly opened Pio Cristiano museum. Located in the Vatican Museums, the Pio Cristiano contains the most comprehensive collection of early Christian funerary art in the world. To our surprise and delight we discovered many sarcophagi of deceased women holding scrolls and codices, hands in teaching gestures, and surrounded by stories from the scriptures.

We had never seen these images before. Could they tell us something about women in the early church?

Most people have never heard of Bitalia, Veneranda, Crispina, Petronella, Leta, or Sofia the Deacon, even though their catacomb and sarcophagus art suggests their authority was influential and valued by early Christian communities. Discovering reliable historical data about Christian women is challenging because most of history relies heavily on literary records authored by men. Even though many female patrons financially subsidized male leaders in the early Church (Mary of Magdala,

Phoebe, Lydia, Domitilla, Paula, Olympias), their presence is barely discernable in the literary sources. It did not take feminist scholars long to recognize that visual imagery and archaeological remains could provide information about women in the early Church either not available or sometimes distorted in the written history.

Christians were part of their Greco-Roman culture and so Christian funerary art is rooted in Greco-Roman artistic conventions. *Crispina and Her Sisters* explores visual imagery found on the funerary art of prominent early Christian women. It details an analysis of 2,119 images from third- to early fifth-century sarcophagi which comprise all publicly available images. A discussion of findings is carefully situated within the cultural context of customary Roman commemorations of the dead.

Recent scholarship about Roman portrait sarcophagi and the interpretation of early Christian art also receives significant attention. An in-depth analysis of iconographical features such as scrolls, speech gestures, and in-facing "apostle" figures suggests that many fourth-century Christian women were commemorated as persons of status, influence, and authority within their Christian social networks. One highly significant (and surprising) finding is that there were three times



as many individual portraits of Christian women compared to individual portraits of Christian men. Another is that over twice as many individual female portraits were portrayed with in-facing "apostle" iconography compared to males. In-facing "apostle" figures are found most frequently in funerary iconography surrounding Christ imagery. This strongly suggests that women used this motif to validate their own authority within the Christian community.

A fascinating picture emerges of women's authority in the early church, a picture either not available or sadly distorted in the written history. It is often said "a picture is worth a thousand words." The portrait tombs of prominent fourth-century Christian women suggest that they viewed themselves and/or their loved ones viewed them as persons of authority with substantial ecclesial influence. These findings correspond well to the hypotheses of biblical and historical scholars such as Carolyn Osiek and Peter Lampe who suggest that women were more influential in the early church than has been commonly recognized.

It has been my great privilege to midwife this unfolding story, first begun by FutureChurch over ten years ago.

Lay ecclesial Ministry is Backbone of Church:

Nearly 40,000 Lay Ministers: 66% are Women

According to a new report by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), the importance of lay ecclesial ministers to the life and work of the Church in the United States of the Church in the United States is illustrated by the fact that nearly 40,000 are currently ministering in parishes nationwide. Of that number, two-thirds are women and sixty-one percent are in their forties or fifties. Thirty percent are under the age of 40. In 2016-2017 CARA identified 202 active lay ecclesial ministry

formation programs. The number enrolled in degree and certificate programs for 2016-2017 is 19,969. Of that number, 75% are working toward a certificate in ministry and 25% are working toward a graduate degree. The total number of enrollees represents a 16 percent decrease from the previous year. CARA urges that the church understand the importance of parish ministers having access to the best possible academic preparation and personal formation. (The CARA Report, Vol. 23 No. 1)

In Memory of Fr. Mike Crosby by Christine Schenk, CSJ



On August 10, I attended a wake service for Capuchin Father Mike Crosby at Detroit's St. Bonaventure Monastery. Mike had been diagnosed with esophageal cancer some months earlier and, after treatments failed, entered hospice care at St. Bonaventure's where his brother Dan, who is also a Capuchin, could accompany him until his death on August 5.

Mike was a very good friend to FutureChurch and to me over the years. He spoke at church reform events all over the U.S., invariably attracting crowds of admirers who appreciated his high energy and his passionate love for scripture and of God's beloved anawim—the poor and marginalized ones.

Every now and again one of us would be under pressure from "the powers that be" in our church who didn't always appreciate our healthy challenge to the status quo. We traded notes about our individual situations and worked hard to juggle conscience alongside our love and commitment to the institutional church. Mike was a true brother to me in these times of struggle and I tried to be a good sister to him.

So it was heart-consoling to convey the love and appreciation of FutureChurch, indeed the entire reform community, at the well-attended service at which Fr. Dan Crosby presided. Many stories were told about Mike's adventuresome, loving, and highly productive life. But Dan's story of Mike's decision to enter the Capuchins stuck with me. Mike, it turns out, had a rather madcap youth. So, he first considered entering an order that ministered to wayward boys (so to speak). Dan intuited that Mike was resisting a call to the Capuchins which he had himself entered several years earlier. When Mike came to visit, the 2 brothers went for a walk. Mike spoke at length about the concrete ministries of the other order before challenging Dan: "So what do the Capuchins have to offer?" Dan paused, then said simply: "Mike all the Capuchins do is the Gospel." The Gospel. And yes, that is what Mike Crosby lived throughout his long and loving life. The Gospel. In the end, it is as simple as that. Thanks Mike!

Catholic Women Preach



What Viewers Are Saying

I would like to say that Elizabeth Burns' preaching yesterday, June 18th 2017, was one of the most profound moving Corpus Christi reflections I've yet heard. I am very grateful to her for this beautiful image of the Body and Blood of Christ, and will share it with many.

Ms. Bowns presentation for the Fifth Sunday of Easter was a beautiful example of what women can do were they allowed to be Deacons and take their rightful place in today's Church. Well done.



I am always looking for good ideas for my sermons so you really help me! Thank you very much for that.

Thank you for creating Catholic Women Preach. Watching the preaching each week has been very meaningful for me.

Dear Sister Janet, thank you for blessing me with your words on the Beatitudes. I'm 78 and a life-long Catholic and your reflection on what Jesus very likely meant by His sermon on the Mount is now beginning to make sense.

Thank you for this great novel resource, as a Jesuit in formation I admire your efforts. Peace and blessings to you.



These great women and their wonderfully powerful wisdom give me HOPE! I dare you to pray through their words, too. Weekly.

Thank you all for your creativity in putting together this project! As a young adult, Catholic woman, I find initiatives like this to be inspiring and helpful in my effort to remain Catholic.



Wow! Truly enriched and filled once again... Thank you, blessed Nancy!

What Preachers Are Saying

When we are at peace, hope emerges. When we are hopeful, we become agents of change. Agents of change believe in and work for a better tomorrow. –Louise Akers, SC

We owe it to ourselves to be mindful of our own wisdom as to what our “needs” are as a community. We need to have the courage of the early Hellenists to put our needs out there for those in authority to understand “what” and “whom” we need in ministry. –Cynthia (Sam) Bowns

Nevertheless, life-giving and empowering voices of women are rising across the world, in church and society. We have heard the voice of the Good Shepherd; we have been nourished by God’s gift of abundant life. With passion and compassion, we lift our voices to ask: Why is our church not listening to us? Why does our church not hear our voices? – Anne Arabome, SSS

In what way are we laboring, like Mary, to birth God’s abiding love into a world so much in need of it? –Christine Schenk, CSJ

We are the ones seized by and sent by Christ Jesus and the Spirit as blessing—to be blessing and to give blessing to those who cannot see any blessing anywhere.—Janet Schlichting, OP

Honor the Mary of Magdala in your life by donating to Catholic Women Preach.

Go to: <http://catholicwomenpreach.org/magdalawomen>



We know that all of this inequality, division and marginalization are not God’s dream for the world. Because on this Holy Thursday, we celebrate and remember the day that Jesus instituted the beloved community in which we are bound together by love and by mercy. –Natalie Terry

Why Mapping and Tracking Women's Leadership in the Church is Important

In a first-of-its kind endeavor, FutureChurch is developing a website for mapping women's leadership and governance in the Church and tracking progress.

In his first apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis wrote, "We need to create still broader opportunities for a more incisive female presence in the church." Still, he is not the first pope to support greater roles for women.

Pope John XXIII credited women for their efforts to gain new rights. In *Pacem in Terris* he wrote, "Women are gaining an increasing awareness of their natural dignity. Far from being content with a purely passive role or allowing themselves to be regarded as a kind of instrument, they are demanding both in domestic and in public life the rights and duties which belong to them as human persons."

Pope Paul VI was the first to invite women (n23) to a Vatican Council and the first to appoint a woman, Rosemary Goldie, to serve in an executive role in the Curia. She was the first female undersecretary of the Pontifical Council for Laity.

In his 1995 *Letter to Women*, Pope John Paul II stressed his support for women's rights, crediting the women's movement with positive achievements and offering an apology for injustices against women in the name of the church.

In an address to priests in May 2005, Pope Benedict XVI suggested there should be greater opportunities for women in the Church. In 2007 in *Women in the Early Church*, Pope Benedict XVI equates the role of women in the early church to that of men writing, "Nor was the female presence in the sphere of the primitive Church in any way secondary."

Despite all these promising papal comments, women are still largely outside of the authority structures of the Church. Presently, women serve in the upper echelons of the Curia, but their numbers are miniscule. In fact, only 3% of curial leadership, undersecretary and above, are female.

Further, there is no mechanism for tracking progress. While popes have talked about the need for a greater presence of women in the Church, there is no transparency in terms of actual data. Where are the women? How many women serve in roles of authority? What influence do they have in terms of decision making and policy?

FutureChurch's project, "Where Are the Women?" is designed to address the need for real time data on women in leadership in the Catholic Church, along with mechanisms to track progress. STAY TUNED!



WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?
CATHOLIC WOMEN IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Catholic Women Preach Flows from a Tradition of Women Overcoming Patriarchal Barriers

Catholic Women Preach is a first-of-its-kind resource designed to end the silencing of women, overcome the suppression of women's authority, and strengthen the preaching mission of the Catholic Church.

Throughout our Christian history, preaching was closely controlled and, in general, officially restricted to males and male clerics. Those in authority sought to control the speech of women early on in Christianity. The Gospel of Mary, 1 Cor 14: 34-35, and 1 Tim 2:11 - 15 illustrate attempts to suppress women's speech and authority. These efforts only grew more pronounced as the masculinization of Church leadership was increasingly solidified from the third century on.

Although the validity of women's preaching, teaching, prophesying, and leadership was contested in every century, women found creative ways to preach. Women tenaciously shaped, enriched, and spread the influence of Gospel in each age. Women like Mary of Magdala, Catherine of Alexandria, Rose of Viterbo, Catherine of Siena, Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine Booth, and Sojourner Truth all preached, prophesied, taught, and exhorted Christians to follow Christ.

Catholic Women Preach flows from the creativity, commitment, and courage of our foremothers in faith who faithfully preached the Word of God to the People of God. Just as women in every age resisted patriarchal pressure to submit and silence their voices, Catholic Women Preach creates the platform for Catholic women to preach today within an Institutional Church that still does not fully recognize their authority to preach. Go to CatholicWomenPreach.org to learn more and to be enriched by the Mary of Magdalas of today! While there, honor the Mary of Magdala in your life by donating to Catholic Women Preach today.

Support our Ongoing Work!

For over 26 years FutureChurch and supporters/activists like you have been advocating for for married priests and optional celibacy; urging the inclusion of women in all forms of Church ministry and governance including at the Vatican; educating about Catholic women witnesses and early Christian women leaders; acting together when facing parish closings or mergers; and, supporting initiatives that further justice within the Church. Specific initiatives include:

Future of Priestly Ministry: Developing strategies for renewed ministry in the Church including married priests and optional celibacy.

Saving Our Parish Community: Assisting parishioners who want to save their beloved parish community from closure.

Emerging Models for Parish & Community Life: In Fall 2017 we will kick off a brand new series of resources on Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life exploring innovative models of ministry for tomorrow.

Catholic Women Deacons: With the formation of a papal commission to study women deacons, FutureChurch has doubled our efforts to make women deacons a reality with DeaconChat, 100 Catholic Women Deacons Campaign, a 4-part podcast series, a prayer service, and retreats for those called. Visit CatholicWomenDeacons.org

Catholic Women Preach: Experience the power, deep spirituality, and untapped potential of Catholic women preaching each Sunday and some feast days. Go to CatholicWomenPreach.org and be inspired!

Beyond Complementarity: Is complementarity's "separate but equal" framework a formula for equality or a rewrite of patriarchal standards for women in the Catholic Church? Our forthcoming resources will help Catholics recognize the fault lines in this teaching and construct a framework for true equality for women and men in the Catholic Church.

Where are the Women? Mapping Women's Leadership in the Catholic Church: Mapping Women's Leadership in the Catholic Church: Coming soon! We have developed the database and are now developing a website that will map and track women's leadership and governance in the Church. This is a first-of-its-kind project that will provide the data we need to advance women in church leadership.

Donate \$125 or more and receive a copy of Sr. Christine Schenk's new book, *Crispina and Her Sisters: Women in Authority in Early Christianity* (release date: Dec. 1, 2017)

I support FutureChurch's work! **Send me a copy of *Crispina and Her Sisters* for my donation of \$125 or more.**

For convenience you can make your gift online at futurechurch.org/store/joindonate

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Hundreds of Catholics Learn about the Pitfalls of Complementarity in the Catholic Church



At the November Call To Action meeting, FutureChurch's Deborah Rose-Milavec gave a presentation on the history and effect of complementarity in the Catholic Church to several hundred CTA participants. In *Complementarity: The Equal but Separate Clause in the Catholic Church*, Rose-Milavec drew a comparison of the "Separate but Equal" legal doctrine adopted in 1868 under U.S. constitutional law to Complementarity in the Catholic Church, the theological-anthropological framework developed most fully under John Paul II's papacy.

The U.S. "Separate but Equal" doctrine created a legal fiction—one that heralded equality but permitted state and local governments to racially segregate public services and facilities. Using imprisonment and violence, Whites enforced their privileged status.

Complementarity, as designed by Catholic hierarchs, also heralds a similarly fictitious equality, but segregates according to sex, keeping women out of halls of governance and ordained ministry within the Church. And although it is not enforced through a criminal code as with Jim Crow, it does legitimate violence. Fr. Shaji George Kochuthara, moral theologian from DVK seminary in Bangalore, along with fifty Catholic female and male theologians pointed to the brutal truth:

Church teaching—while professing the equality of women—promotes the notion of complementarity assigning fixed roles to women and men...and has led to the active/passive paradigm that legitimates violence, such as marital rape, but also emotional, psychological and financial violence that covertly controls women's sexuality.

Along with Rose-Milavec's presentation, FutureChurch also sponsored a 3-part teleconference series on the topic with Natalia Imperatori-Lee, Ph.D., Susan Ross, Ph.D., Todd Salzman, Ph.D., and Michael Lawler, Ph.D.

Imperatori-Lee gave an overview of the elements of complementarity and described why it is flawed. First, complementarity is rooted in essentialism—a biological determinism—the notion that biology is destiny, that the body you are born into pretty much sets the stage for the rest of your life. This leads to a truncated and limited understanding of sex and gender from both a scientific and a psychological perspective. The framework reduces the body to sexual function and, finally, complementarity cautions women against excelling in the so-called masculine sphere. Those who try are viewed as somehow non-masculine or un-feminine, or neglectful of their proper place.

Complementarity, as designed by Catholic hierarchs...segregates according to sex, keeping women out of halls of governance and ordained ministry within the Church.

Ross discussed complementarity's relationship to the sacraments. Complementarity, a rather recent idea, is part of the longer history of a church that has sacramentalized differences in sex. She argues that the spousal metaphor has been subject to a kind of theological creep into doctrines, and that there are alternative metaphors for valuing our embodiment that don't tie us to a biology-equals-destiny understanding.

Finally, Salzman and Lawler talked about complementarity in papal thought, especially in the thought of Pope Francis who has nuanced and widened John Paul II's idea.

All three podcasts are available for download at futurechurch.org/podcasts. You can also view the transcripts of their talks on that page.



Cincinnati: Voices Speaking Continues to Work for Women's Equality in the Church by Deborah Rose-Milavec



At the invitation of Voices Speaking, a group of Catholics dedicated to women's equality in the Catholic Church, Catholics gathered at the United Church of Christ in Cincinnati to learn about the latest developments in women's leadership and ministry in the Church from FutureChurch's Deborah Rose-Milavec.

"While 80% of the lay Catholic workforce are women, only 3% of the top three positions of influence in the Vatican (Prefect, Secretary, Undersecretary) belong to women," explained Deborah Rose-Milavec, Executive Director of FutureChurch.

One of the barriers holding women back is the Church's infatuation with complementarity...

One of the barriers holding women back is the Church's infatuation with complementarity, the anthropological-theological framework honed by Pope John Paul II that claims women and men are equal, but have separate places and roles in the Church.

According to Rose-Milavec, "Pope John Paul II, the pope with the second longest papacy in history, exerted the greatest influence over the Church's teachings on women. In unprecedented fashion, he sought to shape and restrict the roles of women. A prolific writer, he penned the

modern chapter on complementarity and provided what is, for some, a convincing anthropological and theological framework that advanced the Church's support for women's equality in the world as a new fact of faith -- while masterfully polishing the logic such that it exempted the institutional church from being bound to those principles of equality."

Rose-Milavec argues, "Catholic complementarity is our 'Equal but Separate' system of oppression for a class of people. Like Jim Crow or Apartheid of the past, it heralds equality among all peoples but works vigorously to keep a sector of those people separate and without the real means to govern and shape their destinies within a society or an institution."

She continued, "Of course, there is no equivalence between Catholicism's complementarity and Jim Crow and Apartheid in terms of the direct violence that was employed to keep those unjust laws in place, but it would also be wrong to suggest that the Catholic version of the 'equal but separate' clause does not engender violence. In fact, 50 Catholic female and male religious, theologians, and professionals in India recently met and convincingly showed how Catholic complementarity engenders violence against women."

Still, Rose-Milavec said there is good news for women in the Church under Pope Francis because reform-minded Catholics have been working for change at the grassroots level for decades.

"Because courageous dialogue is being encouraged there are more openings for women and men to speak up about the role of women in the Church," said Rose-Milavec.

"The courage of Sr. Carmen Sammut and the International Union of

Superior Generals to lobby a) for seats at the synod of bishops, b) for a place at the table during the plenaries for religious superiors at the Congregation for Consecrated Life, and c) for a new examination of women deacons and reinstating their ministry for today are just a few signs that we are in a new era," according to Rose-Milavec.

It is our hope that...data will help those currently in leadership to see how far we need to go in order to take full advantage of women's gifts, talents, and faith for the good of the Gospel, the Church, and the world.

"And events like the panel discussion with women sharing their views about women in the Church at the Voices of Faith event in Rome on March 8th are also a sign that Pope Francis is serious about fearless dialogue."

Rose-Milavec shared that FutureChurch will be launching a new website mapping where women are in terms of leadership in the Catholic Church. She explained, "While popes and prelates have expressed interest in creating more room for women's leadership in the Church, it is also clear that no one has ever attempted to show exactly where we are now so that we can track how much progress is being made."

"Data can drive decisions," according to Rose-Milavec. "It is our hope that this data will help those currently in leadership to see how far we need to go in order to take full advantage of women's gifts, talents, and faith for the good of the Gospel, the Church, and the world."

The bulk of the sisters ministering in the United States today entered their communities during or before the 1960s. At that time, our culture was still based on the traditional communal structure. People still lived in communities, in a village. Many Catholics identified their parish at their neighborhood. People lived close to family, if not in the same home as extended family. Their communities, their religious traditions, gave them their identities, they told them what their values were and what to believe.

Today, young adults are born into a post-communal individualistic culture, that culture in which the needs and demands of the individual are superior to the needs and demands of the community. Community doesn't tell them what to believe. Individuals have the right to decide what they believe in, what their values are, and how they are going to live their lives. Most young adults in our culture will choose what their religion is and will craft.

So, unlike most humans who have preceded them throughout history, they are not hard-wired to live in community. Most did not grow up surrounded by extended family or in a traditional parish or neighborhood. For this reason, many young adults will look to their partner or spouse to fulfill the role in their lives that community traditionally did. In the individualistic culture, a partner or spouse provides an important part of their identity and their support network. It is probably fair to say that the need for a partner, therefore, is stronger and more crucial to their emotional stability and spiritual health than it was for previous generations.

But so is community, of course. All of this individualism eventually leads to deep isolation, loneliness and rootlessness. But it takes today's young adults a much longer time to realize how vital community is. Adolescence has become a very prolonged state in the new generation. It is probably fair to say that if there were a ritual to mark a young person's entry into adulthood, it would probably be marriage. And young people are getting married later and later because it takes them such a long time to figure out who they are, what they believe in, and what will fulfill them. This is why they are so hesitant about making commitments, especially long term ones.

This cultural phenomenon, I think, provides the basis for why so many communities of women religious have struggled to recruit among college age women or women in their early twenties. Some women in college do not even date, so the idea of making a life commitment at their age is unthinkable, and the idea of making a life-commitment to communal living, without the option of marriage, is even more unthinkable.

Even I, who was born an old soul, who was passionately interested in church and social justice in high school, did not realize how attractive, how powerful communal, religious life is until I reached my early thirties.

Young women are coming to these realizations much later in life, and their readiness and willingness to make life commitments is arriving later in life, too.

But, this does not mean that young women in their twenties and thirties cannot benefit tremendously from getting to know women religious, witnessing your deeply Catholic lives, feeling the support of your communities, enriching their spiritual practices by learning about your charisms, drinking from the deep wells of your wisdom.

Young women, especially those who have felt called to serve the church, study theology, do faith-based work for justice, are starving for spiritual mentors. They share your same hunger for community, charisma, and prayer. They are longing for a safe, sacramental space. They want to be Catholic, as you are, in the truest and deepest sense of the word.

Now I know what many of you are thinking. These young women can easily join the thriving lay associates and companions programs offered by many religious communities. That is true, and my prayer is that all of this media attention you have been receiving will raise your visibility among Catholic women who may not know about lay associate programs.

But associates, it seems to me, have a slightly different purpose in religious life. They immerse themselves in the charisma of a community and then they bring that spirit into their professional and personal lives.

I suspect that there are many women, and I count myself among them, who desire more. Rather than taking the community's spirit into the world, they wish to dwell fully in the community. They want to live among the suffering or in the retreat house. They want to make a home within their ministries. They want to make a life commitment not simply to a profession, but to a mission. Right now in many communities, lay associates do not enjoy the benefit of having a vote in a community or being part of the conversations that take place at the level of the executive team, which makes this kind of full immersion difficult.

There are hundreds of young adult women who want to answer God's call and who can, both theologically and pastorally, sustain the spirit and mission of your religious communities. And I believe some they can do this and be partnered or married. In some cases, my own included, I believe that being in a committed relationship would actually enhance the fruitfulness of some women's vocations to religious life.

For decades, Catholic Worker Houses have found creative ways to accommodate couples. More recently, a multitude of groups are emerging out of what is being called the “new monasticism” movement. These groups are also incorporating couples, some of them even same-sex partners, into their communities.

Interestingly, many of these “new monastics” are actually Protestants who are finding profound meaning and purpose in this ancient Catholic concept. Even young, justice-oriented Evangelicals have been turned on to living in religious communities. These are young adults who grew up so low-church Protestant that they are allergic to liturgy; those who grew up believing that the only prayer that should never be spontaneous is the Lord’s prayer. They live, work, eat and pray together. A few of them even got together recently to write a book of common prayer that looks and sounds a lot like the Liturgy of the Hours. They’ve discovered what one young Evangelical calls an “awesome bed time prayer called Compline.” They are reciting the prayers written

by Romero and reading *The Long Loneliness*.

Much as I love my Protestant friends, it almost pains me to see them take the great Catholic tradition of living in a community based on prayer and social justice work and creatively inject it with new life and meaning, while we Catholics sit around and mourn its imminent loss.

Catholic women have the extraordinary benefit of already being rooted in the tradition. All they need is for a religious community to open its doors to them. Most of us would agree that something new is emerging, but we are not quite sure what it is. I would invite women religious to expand their contemplation to include the voices of young adult women who share a deep understanding of their calling and charism. Even though they may not be ready or willing to profess vows, these young women may hold significant insight into how this prophetic life form might continue to give life to future generations.

You have already created among yourselves a form of church that so

many of us are restless for: small, supportive, non-hierarchical, intimate communities that are deeply rooted in tradition, devoted to sacramental life, and grounded in outreach to the poor and marginalized. You have exemplified what is best about the Catholic tradition. This is the kind of Catholic Church that I hope, I believe, can find a new and full life now and into the future.

Although we won’t find all of the answers to the mysterious future of religious life, by giving young women a voice, by doing so, sisters will be actually provide a much-needed ministry to a different kind of marginalized community. The most overlooked group in the Catholic Church may well be young adult Catholic women who, regardless of the depth of their commitment to the Gospel and to the work of justice, are excluded from nearly every form of life-commitment to ministry.

Together we may be able to attune one another’s prophetic vision and guide one another in reading the signs of the times.

Association of U.S. Catholic Priests Annual Assembly



At the 2017 Association of U.S. Catholic Priests assembly held in Atlanta from June 19 - 22, FutureChurch, Voice of the Faithful, and AUSCP formally launched

DeaconChat, a joint initiative encouraging laity and clergy to dialogue about women deacons. The packet contains historical, theological, and pastoral reasons for restoring women deacons along with tools for starting a conversation with bishops and priests.

The theme of this year’s AUSCP conference was “Peacemaking in Our Fractured Society” and focused on healing the racial divide in the world and within the Church. This year’s AUSCP John XXIII award winner, Fr.

Brian Massingale, opened the conference with a survey of the tragic violence being perpetrated against African Americans today along with a thorough analysis of the historical root causes. He also carefully outlined the complicity of the Catholic Church in perpetuating racism historically and today. During the Q & A period after Massingale’s presentation, some priests expressed anxiety about challenging racism in their largely white parishes. They worried that people would not listen, or even leave if the message was too uncomfortable. But Fr. Massingale’s response was poignant. “Who are your people?” He also wanted to know, “Why do white people matter more than our black brothers and sisters who are suffering?” and participants were reminded of the truth of the old adage that the Gospel is meant to “comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable.”

continued on page 24

The Continued Impact of Fewer Priests

What does the shrinking number of priests mean for the future of the church? In terms of priest numbers, we are hitting a brick wall. Some say we have already hit it.

The trends have not changed. The priest shortage continues unabated. Some say we are experiencing the end of the priesthood as we have known it.

In a March 8, 2017 interview with the German newspaper Die Zeit, Pope Francis said, "The church needs to discuss the ordination of proven married men (viri probati) as the lack of vocations has become an 'enormous' problem."

"The problem is the lack of vocations, a problem the church must solve," Francis said. "We must think about whether viri probati are one possibility, but that also means discussing what tasks they could take on in remote communities. In many communities at the moment, committed women are preserving Sunday as a day of worship by holding services of the Word. But a church without the Eucharist has no strength" (National Catholic Reporter, March 10, 2017).

Since the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate started tracking the numbers, the total number of priests in the United States has dropped from 58,632 in 1965 to 37,192 in 2016 with 21,440 fewer priests, a 37% drop. And while that number is important, the number of active priests has dropped considerably, from 94% in 1965 to 63% in 2016, and, although the number of ordinations has risen somewhat over the past year, the number of new priests is still too low to meet the needs of U.S. Catholics which have risen from 45.6m in 1965 to 67.7m in 2016.

Parishes are being merged and closed. According to Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate,

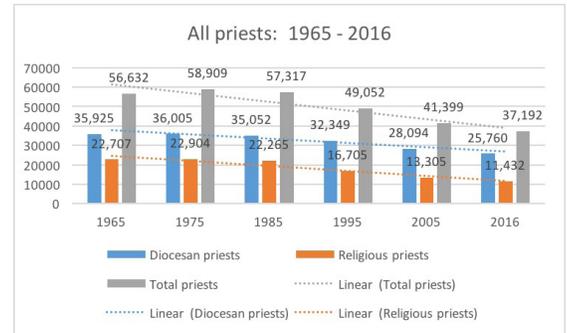
since 1990, nearly 2400 parishes are out of existence. Those statistics mean that the local church, the very Body of Christ that has been built up for the work of the Gospel, Catholic style, is tragically being shut down—one living, breathing parish at a time.

Still the number of parishes without priests has risen dramatically. The good news is that the laity is stepping up. The number of Lay Ecclesial Ministers, Lay Professionals and Permanent Deacons is rising steeply. While those numbers climb, the number of parishes led by someone other than an ordained priest (Canon 517.2) is falling—another indication that our bishops are tragically slow to meet the current needs of the church.

What is clear is that Catholics still care about the future of the Church. They are willing to get the training they need to carry out the work in our parishes and communities.

Our upcoming series, Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life, will explore the exciting innovations that are being piloted in the U.S. and around the world. The Spirit of God lives on, and the People of God are responding.

FutureChurch has been providing educational and advocacy resources addressing the priest shortage since our beginning over 26 years ago.



Association of U.S. Catholic Priests, continued from page 23

Fr. Clarence Williams, Fr. Kenneth Taylor, and other priests from the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus led Mass with a liturgy of lament where participants reflected on the many ways we still perpetuate racism in our culture and in the Church. They reminded mass-goers of the African American men and women who had been turned away from the Catholic Church including Fr. Augustus Tolton (1854-1897), a former slave, who could not enter the seminary in the United States because he was black. He went to Rome to obtain the education and formation he needed to become a priest and was ordained there in 1886. He came back to the United States and founded the first black Catholic church in Chicago.

In the evenings, participants gained a greater historical perspective on racism watching the documentary "I am Not Your Negro" based on James Baldwin's writings. They also viewed "Hidden Figures," the story of African American women at NASA. On the last day of the conference, participants made a pilgrimage to Ebenezer Baptist Church where they walked in the footsteps of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the many leaders of the Civil Rights movement. They ended with Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, the first Black Catholic Church in Atlanta where the Gospel music and liturgical dance lent to an uplifting liturgy.

To see the video of Fr. Massingale's presentation, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmhRaBqthx4>

To read Sr. Jeannine Gramick's report on the assembly, go to: <https://www.ncronline.org/news/people/us-priests-association-wants-focus-formation>

Voices of Faith Welcomes Censured Sr. Simone Campbell into the Heart of the Vatican

In 2012, along with the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Sr. Simone Campbell and her organization, NETWORK, were censured and investigated by the Vatican. NETWORK, in particular, was criticized for focusing too much on poverty and economic injustice, while keeping “silent” on abortion and same sex marriage. After years of strong pushback from U.S. Catholics and a change in leadership at the top, the investigation finally ended.

And it felt like Justice was having her day when Sr. Simone spoke as one of the panelists during the Voices of Faith annual event held for the fourth time on March 8, 2017, inside the Vatican.

In her interview with America Magazine, Sr. Simone admitted that she wept just before the event. Referring to the investigation, she confided, “I have to tell you that I was talking to one of the religious women before our panel [at the conference], and I just started to cry because there’s a way in which I stayed focused on mission and didn’t let the hurt sink it. But being here is a treasure, it’s a huge treasure to me and to women in the United States.”

At the conference, she recognized the courageous work that is being done by women of faith of all ages across the world. Still, she also detected “some sadness, because there is a feeling that the church is getting left behind. Everyone else is waking up to women’s leadership, but our beloved church, slow as it is, is not benefitting from the opportunity,” said Sr. Simone.

The Voices of Faith event, “Stirring the Waters: Making the Impossible Possible” opened this year with Father Arturo Sosa, SJ, Superior General of the Society of Jesus.

He told those gathered, “Although Pope Francis has voiced his support for broader participation of women’s



voices in the decisions of the Catholic Church, that inclusion, which would bring the gifts of resilience and collaboration even more deeply into the church, remains stymied on many fronts.”

“If we are honest, we acknowledge that the fullness of women’s participation in the church has not yet arrived.”

He concluded by quoting St. Francis of Assisi: “Start by doing what is necessary, then what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.” Fr. Sosa said it was in that spirit that they gathered “to listen to Voices of Faith, to hear stories of resilience, collaboration and inclusion. We have more than started. We will not stop.”

Deborah Rose-Milavec is a member of the Voices of Faith Advisory Board and served as the moderator of the first VOF panel discussion in 2015. Since then she has been a key organizer for the panel discussions each year.

Sr. Mary C. Boys, SNJM, Reflects on the Feast of St. Mary of Magdala



JULY 22, 2017
THE FEAST OF ST. MARY OF MAGDALA
"May we let the apostle Mary Magdalene step into her rightful place in our church and world! Let us celebrate her as wounded healer, evangelist, and witness to the Risen One. May the Apostles continue to bear witness that Christ is alive!"

MARY C. BOYS, SNJM



In 1637 Puritan churches in the Massachusetts Bay Colony put Anne Hutchinson on trial, telling her, "You have stepped out of your place." She had dared giving religious instruction to men as well as women. Such teaching was not "fitting for your sex."

In 1967 Kathrine V. Switzer stepped out of her place to become the first woman to dare to run the Boston Marathon. The marathon's director, outraged at her audacity, darted onto the course and literally tried to shove her out of the race. But her boyfriend threw him a body block, allowing Kathrine to avoid her attacker and become the first woman to finish the Boston Marathon.

May we let the apostle Mary Magdalene step into her rightful place in our church and world!

In the case of Mary Magdalene, church officials figuratively pushed her off the resurrection scene in the Gospel of John and resituated her in the story of an unnamed, sinful woman in Luke 7. The Magdalene's place in Christianity, it seemed, was not as a disciple of the crucified and risen Jesus, sent to bear witness to the resurrection, but as a repentant prostitute.

Over the ages, many legends and myths made the Magdalene a larger than life figure, often as a voluptuous woman evoking the dangers of female sexuality. The many variations of her mistaken identity as the penitent prostitute have so shaped the imagination that she is largely unknown by her rightful title: Apostle to the Apostles. Tragically, her mistaken identity also veiled women's leadership in the early communities of Jesus' followers.

To restore Mary of Magdala to her rightful place, we need to probe what the gospels say of her. Two texts are particularly important. The first, Luke 8:1-3 (cf. Mark 16:9), speaks of a group of women traveling with Jesus who "had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities." Of Mary "seven demons had gone out."

Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources (Luke 8:1-3).

In the world of antiquity, demons or "unclean spirits," were simply a given: language that sought to name the inexplicable, to identify conditions that ravaged people's lives. The evangelists depict Jesus as a healer to whom people "possessed" by unclean spirits were drawn.

What was it that "possessed" Mary Magdalene? Luke's detail about seven demons suggests a disturbance not easily dislodged, perhaps something like severe depression. We might imagine that the Magdalene's healing happened over time, maybe over months as Jesus worked with her, drawing from her whatever had kept her from living into her full humanity. Hers was the discipleship of a wounded healer.

A second key text is from the Gospel of John (20:1-18). Here Mary encounters the Risen Christ at the tomb, initially mistaking him for the gardener, only to recognize her Teacher when Jesus called her by name. He sends her to tell the disciples the astonishing news of his resurrection.

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' . . .

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.' When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?' Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But

Sr. Mary C. Boys Reflects on St. Mary of Magdala

go to my brothers and say to them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord'; and she told them that he had said these things to her (John 20:1-18).

We need to reclaim the Mary Magdala of these two powerful texts. We need to let her step into her rightful place as the "Apostle to the Apostles," as a leader in the early community of Jesus' followers, as a wounded healer who bore witness to the power of the Spirit, and as the first to proclaim the resurrection.

Jesus may have chosen the apostle Mary of Magdala to play a vital role in his community, but later generations found this too radical, too counter-cultural. So, Mary of Magdala, Apostle to the Apostles, had to be put in her place, lest women be seen as equals in making known the

Gospel. Refashioning Mary as a repentant prostitute kept women from stepping out of their place.

So, sorrow tinges our remembrance. The Magdalene's mistaken identity calls us to lament all that the church has lost over the ages by its repression of women's leadership—a repression that continues to constrict the church and betray the ministry of Jesus.

And yet, we live in hope. Just as today we can't imagine a Boston or New York Marathon—or any marathon—without women, so, too, may the day come that we can't imagine the church's apostles without picturing women alongside men.

May we let the apostle Mary Magdalene step into her rightful place in our church and world! Let us celebrate her as wounded healer, evangelist, and witness to the Risen One. May the Apostle of Apostles continue to bear witness that Christ is alive!

2017 Mary of Magdala Celebration Women of the Word Litany

Let us join our voices with the voices of the women prophets and preachers of the Hebrew Scriptures. May our voices joined with theirs bring about a covenant of justice and peace:

Miriam, prophet and leader among the Israelites ... pray with us

Deborah, the judge ... pray with us

Huldah, the prophet ... pray with us

Let us join our voices with the women of the Gospels who proclaimed the good news. May our voices joined with theirs bring about a Church which is modeled on the inclusive ministry of Jesus:

Mary, mother of Jesus ... pray with us

Anna, the Temple prophet ... pray with us

The Samaritan woman, evangelizer ... pray with us

Mary of Magdala, apostle to the apostles... pray with us

We join our voices with the women who were leaders and proclaimers in the early Church. May our voices joined with theirs bring about a church where women's leadership is valued and understood as necessary.

Phoebe, the deacon ... pray with us

Prisca, the missionary ... pray with us

Lydia, leader of the first house-church in Europe ... pray with us

Junia, esteemed by Paul as "outstanding among the apostles" ... pray with us

We join our voices with the women preachers of the Middle Ages. May our voices joined with theirs bring about a church of compassionate understanding:

Catherine of Siena, speaker of truth to power ... pray with us

Hildegard of Bingen, mystic, abbess, and preacher ... pray with us

Rose of Viterbo, mystic and preacher of penance ... pray with us

We join our voices with the women preachers and martyrs of recent history. May our voices joined with theirs bring about a poor church for the poor.

Dorothy Day, journalist, activist, and founder of the Catholic Worker Movement ... pray with us

Thea Bowman, evangelist and Servant of God ... pray with us

Dorothy Stang, martyr of the Amazon ... pray with us

And all you holy women who throughout time have proclaimed the Good News... pray with us

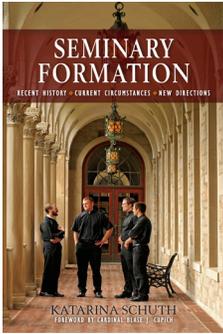


Book Reviews

A Review by Fr. Bob Bonnot, AUSCP

Seminary Formation: Recent History, Current Circumstances, New Directions

by Katarina Schuth, O.S.F.



Laitly and older clergy who grew into their faith and life's vocation in the wake of Vatican II know in their bones that something in the seminary formation of clergy went awry in recent decades, but we don't know what. How, we ask, could post-Vatican II seminaries form priests with a pre-Vatican II mindset and send them forth to minister to people living in today's church and world? 'Tiz a puzzlement!

Katarina Schuth, O.S.F., is Professor for the Social Scientific Study of Religion at St. Paul Seminary in the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. Seminary formation has been her sociological focus for decades. Her 2016 publication on the question is the title of this review. It's as sure a guide out of our puzzlement as one can find.

Through seven brief, detailed, and insightful chapters, Schuth takes her reader from the effects of Vatican II on the Present State of Seminaries to New Directions for the Future. She reports and analyzes seminary organization and personnel, seminary and lay students preparing for ministry, and their programs of human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation. Then she draws conclusions.

Numerous factors have contributed to the current situation in which many recently ordained priests, most born after 1965 who never experienced the pre-Vatican II Church, come out with a determination to minister in a pre-Vatican II way. Some emerge complete with cassock, biretta, fiddle-back vestments, capes, preference for Latin and the novus ordo (Tridentine) liturgy, and, most importantly, a clerical mindset. In my recent meetings with priests across the country I heard laments about this reality everywhere. One deacon seminarian had made known that, once ordained, his number one priority and that of his classmates would be the elimination of girl servers. Happily, his bishop terminated his path to priesthood.

Among the factors contributing to this situation was familial, social, moral, and ecclesial unrest in the decades following Vatican II, the decline in seminary recruits, the 1983 Code of Canon Law, the centralizing governance of the Church during the long pontificates of John Paul II and Benedict XVI, and their concerns for doctrinal orthodoxy and tight discipline. Schuth reports that immediately following Vatican II most seminary rectors held advanced degrees in theological disciplines. Today most hold degrees

in canon law. Somehow a 'reform of the reform of Vatican II' mindset took hold not only of the Vatican but of most U.S. bishops, of rectors, and of faculty in the declining number of surviving seminaries. The pastoral surge of care for God's people by servant-leaders generated by Vatican II was gradually but effectively reversed in favor of hierarchically disciplined shepherds holding the line on Roman orthodoxy and reducing the participation of the laity in the life of the Church, even in the liturgy.

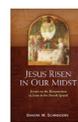
Schuth professionally and diplomatically traces this trajectory. She concludes by articulating new directions for the future with the help of essays by other authors addressing respectively the Spirituality of Ecclesial Leadership (Ronald Rolheiser), Generational Differences (Thomas Walters), Human Formation (Lean M. Hutton), Trends in Scripture Study and Preaching Preparation in Seminaries (Barbara E. Reid), and the future of seminary formation in terms of Pope Francis' accent on Encounter and accompaniment (Peter Vaccari).

For me, one of Schuth's most disconcerting insights is the support of a clerical mentality among seminarians due to the separation of candidates for ordination from lay students preparing for lay ministry. Both follow much the same course of studies creating a lay expectation of being co-workers and partners in ministry. But this is not the expectation of clerics. They see themselves as men set apart in a hierarchy whose task is strictly to uphold orthodoxy and discipline. Their challenge is to undo the perceived damage done by Vatican II priests. Schuth accents the need for collaboration between these two groups on an individual and local parish level, but if her insight is right, the current pattern of training will cause great hurt and could be disastrous for the vitality of parish life and the effectiveness of ministry to God's people. Serious adjustments in seminary formation are needed, soon.

A Review by Diana Culbertson, O.P.

Jesus Risen in Our Midst: Essays on the Resurrection of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel

by Sandra Schneiders



In this anthology of essays drawn from previously published—but relatively inaccessible to the non-specialist reader—Sandra Schneiders addresses the most critical problem of the Christian believer: how to imagine Jesus as personally alive and present to us. All essays are based on the Fourth Gospel, a distinctive text that must be examined in its own context, its own

internal structure and theological purpose. In six chapters she discusses—in detail—the meaning of “body” in the context of Christian belief in the Resurrection, and how understanding this meaning affects both faith and hope. Focusing particularly in one chapter on the experiences of Mary Magdalene and Thomas, Schneiders examines the purpose of the two memorable incidents of “touching” in the Johannine text. Disciples must give up their preoccupation with the historical-physical so that they can be open to faith in the ecclesial-bodily presence of Jesus. Central to the examination of the Resurrection in John’s Gospel, therefore, is the understanding of the “bodiliness” of the Risen Jesus.

Western readers need to be reminded that “body” is interpreted differently in pre-modern and Semitic languages. In John “body” is the person, the whole self (living or dead). It does not mean “flesh” as in contemporary western terminology. “Resurrection” in John’s Gospel is the return of Jesus to his followers. It is not the same as “Glorification” which refers to the return of Jesus to his Father. This kind of examination of John’s vocabulary is essential to interpreting John’s text, and Schneiders provides a clear entrée into John’s vocabulary, illuminating its distinctive theology.

Especially significant is the author’s analysis of the Temple motif—the bodily Jesus as the “New Temple” and the task of the new corporate Body, the Church, to “take away the sin (sins) of the world.” The author’s focus on the role of the Holy Spirit in the overcoming of sin and the subsequent role of the disciples in the work of reconciliation clarifies John’s distinctive theology.

Included in the final essay is an analysis of the work of Rene Girard on scapegoating and violence, and how Girard’s theory affects our understanding of the Crucifixion and death of Jesus. What does it mean to speak (in John’s description) of Jesus as “the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world”? In the final essay Schneiders—in agreement with the Girardian interpretation of sacrifice—corrects the dangerous misinterpretation of the Crucifixion as something required by God. He was the innocent victim of human violence—unique because he did not remain in the grip of death. “Jesus was not sacrificed by or to God, nor did he will his own death.”

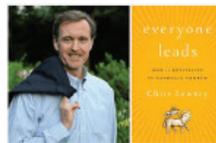
Readers who follow the author’s arguments closely in these carefully reasoned essays will gain a deeper understanding of the distinctive theology of the Fourth Gospel and appreciate more fully the profundity of a text that is too often blurred by casual assimilation into the storyline of the other Gospels. In this context see especially the author’s reading—in the final chapter of the book of John 20:23—a probing interpretation which may surprise you. Sandra Schneiders offers for the careful reader such close analyses of John’s Gospel that

one can never see (or hear) the text again without recalling its theological brilliance submerged in language that is deceptively simple. This not a book for the casual reader. Don’t take it to the beach.

A Review by Frances DeChant

Everyone Leads: How to Revitalize the Catholic Church

by Chris Lowney



The large cap title of Chris Lowney’s book, *Everyone Leads*, raised my eyebrows. Was the author, who incorporates into his book technology from the world of business and finance, looking to create a church of all chiefs and no followers? As I read, the answer became a negative. In the course of his book, Lowney unwraps a definition of leadership that works for his proposed solutions to critical problems besetting today’s Catholic Church. Lowney focuses on leadership of a different sort. His imagined church leaders are courageous innovators. They are quick to utilize entrepreneurial advances that characterize society today. They are deeply dedicated to church ministry. They are prayerfully active in drawing others to begin walking that walk. And in his vision they are all of us.

In the words of Lowney, “Above all, we want a strategy that embodies the church’s core mission, not anyone’s personal agenda. We’re not inventing a different mission for the church but expressing our timeless mission in language that enables every person, parish, and ministry to contribute more proactively. . . . The EASTeR project is a pathway to accomplishing all of this.”

Five parts of Lowney’s strategic project, which he calls its pillars, begin with embracing and empowering but particularly donning an entrepreneurial spirit. “To improve, we will become more nimble, exploit modern technology, express our message creatively, share information more widely, empower our laity, vary prayer and worship styles to accommodate our very diverse populations, offer meaningful spiritual growth opportunities, make better use of our talent, and, overall, be not only open to new ways of doing things but eagerly seek new approaches.” A tall order.

Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of Lowney’s project correspond with the letters, A, S, T and R of the title, EASTeR. Section A covers accountability. Lowney is hardly the only one calling for at least minimal accountability owed by the church hierarchy to its membership. Few modern institutions

continued on page 31

“The Spirit is Leading us into an Unanticipated Future.”¹



In the 1950s parishes were growing and pastors and associate pastors were the sole providers of ministry. That model is no longer doable, nor, many might say, desirable.

With the Second Vatican Council, the role and promise of lay leadership began to emerge with new force and confidence. Lay Catholics were co-responsible for the vitality and sustenance of faith life. Innovation in ministry, liturgy and education was in the air. Catholic women and men began to take up new roles in ministry and governance. Other factors also drove change including the shrinking number of male celibate priests; the crisis of clergy sex abuse; shifting populations; alienation of women, LGBTQI, divorced and remarried Catholics, and Catholics whose parishes were being closed or merged; and an increasingly pluralistic society.

In *Catholic Parishes of the 21st Century*,² the authors track the vitality of Catholic leadership and parish life. After World War II, hundreds of young men entered seminaries where they took up ministerial roles in parishes. Only Europe had better ratios of priests per parishioner. Since that period, the number of priests has fallen sharply even as the number of Catholics continues to rise sharply. In 2013, Africa and the Americas have a ratio of 1 priest per 5000 Catholics. Asia and Oceania have 2000 per priest. Europe has 1500 Catholics per priest and the United States has 1700 Catholics per priest.³

Zech and the authors summarize the current situation in Catholic parish life. They find five trends and four immediate impacts that will be with us for the foreseeable future.

Trends

1. Declining vocations to ordained and non-ordained religious life
2. Catholic migration from the inner city to the suburbs and from the Northeast and Midwest to the South and West.
3. Continued growth in the U.S. Catholic population fueled by immigration.
4. The continuing impact of Vatican II.
5. Declining participation in sacraments.

Impact

1. The need to reconfigure parish organizational structures.
2. An increase in multicultural parishes.
3. A greater role for laity.
4. Increasing stress on parish and diocesan finances.

If, as we profess, the Eucharist is central to Catholic life, and if it is to remain the rich, challenging and nurturing presence of Christ and community of which we partake, then we need to find ways, not only to preserve it, but to strengthen it so that all of God's people can share in its life-giving promise.

FutureChurch's Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life initiative seeks to spotlight innovative models of parish and community life and leadership and to build confidence in all Catholics regarding their roles and responsibilities so that all the faithful are better equipped to carry out the work of the Gospel.

For instance, Bishop Fritz Lobinger of South Africa, has proposed priests of a different kind. He has proposed that communities ordain teams of "proven leaders" in Catholic communities to preside over the Eucharist and other sacraments along with the ministries associated with our Gospel mission. Lobinger offers a sensible guide for implementing such a strategy.⁴

Chris Lowney offers a new definition for leadership.⁵ He believes leadership begins at the grassroots with the empowerment of the laity and is rooted in mission and courageous innovation. He offers practical steps for rebuilding the vibrancy of the church that we love.

Jamie Manson will discuss the possibilities for religious life, communities that act as "the greenhouses for the Gospel" according to Petra Dankova of Voices of Faith. Since traditional religious communities are shrinking, a phenomenon that parallels what is happening with the traditional model of Catholic priests, Manson offers innovative ideas for creating the religious communities of tomorrow.

Edward Hahnenberg will discuss the theology for parish lay leadership and ministry today. He offers innovative ways to engage both the tradition and our modern day experience in ways that are effective for spreading the Gospel.

The Spirit is Leading us

The Association of U.S. Catholic Priests will discuss their proposal for priest-less parishes. In light of the growing reality of few priests, they offer alternatives for keeping parishes open and vibrant.

Finally, at our Fall Event on October 27, 2017, Sr. Sandra Schneiders will discuss John's Gospel as a Blueprint for Parish and Community Life today. Schneiders excavates the riches of John's unique community with its particular understanding of the view of the person, the role of women, the role of community in forgiveness, and the meaning of Resurrection.

This series will launch what will become a series of written and online resources for Catholics who are hungry to learn from others so that they can help shape the future of the Church for this generation and for generations to come.

Go to
<https://futurechurch.org/EmergingModels>
to learn more.

Book Reviews, continued from page 29

survive today without being fully accountable to those who serve them. The Catholic Church remains caught in the ancient past. Lowney considers money only part of the payoff, but emphasizes that Catholics could go from the least financially generous of America's religions, giving only an average of 0.7 percent of income, to topping the Baptists, who give about 2 percent of household income.

The remaining sections, S, T and R cover service, personal spiritual transformation and reaching out to those who have drifted from the church, never heard of it, or are marginalized by it. Lowney paints an image I found quite unforgettable. He calls the anecdote "wet socks" and describes a sister who dips her fingers in a holy water font upon entering an inner city church. A woman steps to her side and warns the author's friend not to touch the water. She has seen a desperate homeless man rinsing filthy socks in the font's waters. This, the mission of our church to serve, to keep on serving, and to find new ways of serving the poor is one of the strongest of Lowney's church renewal pillars.

Lowney draws upon warm welcoming practices found in churches other than Catholic. He is not alone in identifying the near absence of hospitality to those visiting our churches as well as a lack of follow-up concern for those absenting themselves from our congregations. The focus

¹Those are the words of Dr. Marti Jewell, director emeritus of the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project (which began in 2003) in her Foreword for *Catholic Parishes of the 21st Century* by Charles E. Zech, Mary L. Gautier, Mark M. Gray, Jonathon L. Wiggins, and Thomas P. Gaunt, S.J.

²Zech, Charles E., Mary L. Gautier, Mark M. Gray, Jonathon L. Wiggins, and Thomas P. Gaunt, S.J. *Catholic Parishes of the 21st Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

³Ibid. p20.

⁴Lobiinger, Fritz. *Like His Brothers and Sisters: Ordaining Community Leaders*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998.

⁵Lowney, Chris. *Everyone Leads: How to Revitalize the Catholic Church*. Lanham, MD. Rowman and Littlefield, 2017.

is especially on the young adult population where loss statistics are the highest. Lowney emphasizes the need to undertake many ways of recognizing, incorporating, and being there for this group, so vital to the future of the church.

Everyone Leads is one of many studies on how to revitalize a church gravely in need of solutions to problems new and old. Its value lies particularly in two strengths with which the author presents his proposals. First, Lowney makes quite a successful effort to frame his material in ways attractive to both traditionalists and progressives. He quotes evenhandedly from all the recent popes to highlight points. The words of Benedict XVI and John Paul II pepper some of his paragraphs. But he uses the powerful "dusty shoes" imagery of Pope Francis in a closing chapter. Possibly of greater importance, Lowney presents himself with sincere humility. His are not sweeping remedies to the problem of declining clergy or efforts at hierarchical reformation. In his opinion revitalization begins and develops its vigor in the grassroots. Chris Lowney has created small, achievable steps toward shaping a church we would want to be in. His book is readable. His proposals are worthy of prayerful consideration.

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Focus

FutureChurch

FutureChurch Calendar of Events

September 8 – 10, 2017
Mercy Center, CA
Second Retreat for Women Discerning a Call to the
Diaconate

September 13, 2017
FutureChurch Emerging Models Teleconference
Association of U.S. Catholic Priests
*Priestless Parishes: A Strategy for Keeping Parishes
Open*

September 20, 2017
FutureChurch Presentation
Call To Action - Columbus Chapter
*Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life: Innovations
for Today and Tomorrow*

October 5 – 14, 2017
FutureChurch Pilgrimage to Greece
Following in the Footsteps of Our Foremothers in Faith
With Sr. Christine Schenk and Jocelyn Collen, M.Div.

October 23, 2017
FutureChurch Emerging Models Teleconference
Ed Hahnenberg, Ph.D.
Emerging Models of Ministry

October 27, 2017
FutureChurch Fall Event
Sr. Sandra Schneiders, IHM
*John's Gospel: Blueprint for the
Future of Parish and Community Life*

November 8, 2017
FutureChurch Emerging Models Teleconference
Fr. Robert D. Duch
Bishop Fritz Lobinger's Model for Ordained Team Leaders

November 11, 2017
Naples, FL
Oasis Conference on Women Deacons
Deborah Rose-Milavec on Hope and Advocacy

January 17, 2018
FutureChurch Emerging Models Teleconference
Jamie Manson
The Future of Religious Life

February 7, 2018
FutureChurch Emerging Models Teleconference
Chris Lowney
Everyone Leads: How To Revitalize the Catholic Church

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printed just two or three times each year.
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E-Newsletter at www.futurechurch.org



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