Catholics Speak Out Against Restrictive Teacher Contracts

Catholics who oppose the restrictive new teacher contracts in Catholic schools in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Honolulu and Oakland are speaking up. They are concerned that the rights of teachers in their Catholic schools are being eroded and that the bishops issuing these contracts are out of step with the pastoral tone and teaching of Pope Francis.

In Cincinnati, Catholics working with the Voice of the Faithful used billboards to ask, “Would Pope Francis Sign the New Catholic Teacher Contract?” Regina Brett, a Catholic who writes for the Cleveland Plain Dealer, called the contracts “unchristian.”

The Cincinnati and Cleveland contracts redefine “teachers” as “teacher-ministers.” While the Honolulu contracts forgo a contractual redefinition of “teacher,” the Oakland contract incorporates the new minister language under the list of duties. According to experts in the field, such redefinitions could undermine teachers’ ability to contest perceived employer mistreatment in a civil court or unionize to bargain for better wages and working conditions.

The Cincinnati, Cleveland and Honolulu contracts contain lists of explicitly prohibited behaviors assigning high stakes consequences, up to and including termination, to a very narrow body of Catholic doctrine and teaching on sexual morality. Since the contracts also include language that prohibits “public support” of these listed behaviors without defining the term, many Catholics wonder how these contracts will be enforced and how that enforcement will impact the school environment.

Bob Kloos, a Cleveland Catholic, expressed his concern over the contracts this way, “Parents are the first of teachers…Of course, they want authentic Catholic teaching, but they and their kids live in a world that is witnessing evolving cultures and values. We ALL have to find words that describe our understanding of what is loving and inclusive and supportive. That will look more like the reign of God than the tenor and the content of the contracts.”

“We ALL have to find words that describe our understanding of what is loving and inclusive and supportive. That will look more like the reign of God than the tenor and the content of the contracts.”

Catholics have the power to transform the Church toward justice. On May 28th we issued a statement calling on bishops in Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Honolulu to open dialogue with teachers, parents and other stakeholders in their Catholic schools regarding the purpose, scope and content of the new teacher contracts.

This kind of dialogue is occurring in Oakland where students, teachers and parents met with their bishop asking him to modify the contracts. It is a request he has agreed to undertake. Go to futurechurch.org to learn more.

Making Optional Celibacy a Reality

In response to Pope Francis’ call to be “courageous” in expressing the needs of our regional church, FutureChurch is launching our 2014 Open Letter to the United States Bishops. While discussing the priest shortage with Brazilian Bishop Erwin Krautler and the possibility of ending mandatory celibacy Pope Francis expressed openness to dialogue and initiative from the bishops. He urged Bishop Krautler and local bishops to engage in conversation, to form a consensus on reform, and to present these concrete suggestions to Rome.

In the United States many Catholics are engaged in a struggle to keep their parishes open. The 2014 open letter calls for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to commit to dialogue about the needs of U.S. Catholics and to address solutions for priest-less parishes and Mass-less Catholics as part of their regional gatherings.

FutureChurch maintains that a priesthood of both married and celibate men enriches our entire Church by bringing forward a diversity of gifts in the service of the Gospel and the people of God. In addition, opening the permanent diaconate to women enriches our faith life by creating more space for women’s voices and experience through preaching and carrying out the work of ministry. Both would help alleviate the effects of the worsening priest shortage in our parishes. FutureChurch remains committed to working for the future of our communities and access for all Catholics to the Eucharist.

Send a letter to Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, President of the USCCB and to your local bishop asking them to open dialogue on a married priesthood today!

Go to http://futurechurch.org/actions/openletter/2014/
From the Director's Desk

This is an amazing moment in our Church. Our future is unfolding in dramatic new ways as we enter the second year of the Francis papacy. Daily exposure to a pope who practices simple, uncompromising gospel values is inspiring Catholics to new levels of faith and action, but also, according to Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga, provoking bold moves by some bishops and cardinals determined to test the strength and endurance of his vision.

In April, Cardinal Gerhard Müller admonished the Leadership Conference of Women Religious for choosing Dr. Elizabeth Johnson CSJ for their 2014 annual Outstanding Leadership Award. He also criticized the organization for exploring Conscious Evolution. With extraordinary purpose and calm, LCWR leadership responded to Cardinal Müller’s criticism with the patience of a skilled teacher helping a student grasp new ideas. And at their side stood thousands of Catholics showing their support. So far, over 10,400 have signed a petition to Pope Francis asking him to remove the mandate.

This spring, controversial new teacher contracts were issued in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Honolulu and Oakland redefining the status of teachers and prohibiting a select group of behaviors that, if practiced or publicly supported, could be cause for termination. Catholics responded by mobilizing. They organized. They wrote letters. They gathered in protest. And with prophetic clarity they exposed two contrasting forces at work in the Church today by asking the iconic question, “Would Pope Francis sign the new Catholic teacher contract?”

Reform minded Catholics are witnessing these events and working in tandem with Pope Francis to shift the balance in favor of collaborative, transparent ministerial and governance structures. Together, they are coaxing a gospel-centered vision of Church into being.

There is evidence everywhere that Pentecost is upon us and the Holy Spirit is alive transforming the Church and the world through all the people of God.

DEBORAH ROSE-MILAVEC

Catholic voices at the Synod on the Family

From October 5 - 19, 2014, Pope Francis will convene an Extraordinary Synod on the Family asking bishops to consider more pastoral approaches to Catholics who have experienced exclusion and pain as a result of being divorced and remarried or living in same-sex or other diverse familial relationships.

Cardinal Walter Kasper, an advisor to Pope Francis who advocates for such a pastoral approach, believes it is the voice of faithful Catholics who transform the Church. “The strongest support comes from the people, and you cannot overlook that” (Religious News Service, 05/15/14). FutureChurch invites Catholics to write to Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri asking that theologians with families be consulted so that all families may be adequately represented in the work of the Synod. Go to www.futurechurch.org or www.mycatholicfamily.org to learn more.

Catholic Tipping Point Resumes

After the success of the first tour with Fr. Helmut Schüller in 2013, the Catholic Tipping Point coalition resumes with a second tour featuring Fr. Tony Flannery, founder of the Association of Catholic Priests in Ireland. From October 21 thru November 19, 2014, Fr. Tony will make his way to the United States for an eighteen-city tour discussing the role of conscience in faith life and the future of reform in the Catholic Church. Get ready to be inspired! Go to www.catholic tippingpoint.org to learn more.
Recovering the memory of women leaders in early Christianity and advocating for women’s leadership today!

In March, FutureChurch’s Deborah Rose-Milavec and Sr. Chris Schenk had the privilege of journeying with thirty-one extraordinary pilgrims to early Christian sites in Rome exploring ancient house churches and other settings where women functioned as leaders. Led by renowned scholar, Sr. Carolyn Osiek, the group saw ancient frescoes and sarcophagi friezes and visited catacombs and basilicas that bore the names of women leaders like Priscilla, Pudentiana, Praxedis and Domitilla.

At many of the sites, prayer services were led by Sr. Chris Schenk. These beautiful services helped everyone prayerfully recall our foremothers in faith, as well as courageous women of our day whose faithful commitment, daily service and prophetic leadership are changing the face of the Church.

Pilgrims came from the U.S., Canada and the U.K. with the youngest being 14 years of age. Many were scholars in their own right in the field of early Christian history. The group was comprised of academics, teachers, clergy, ministers, activists and leaders who brought a rich mix of knowledge and experience to all our explorations and interactions.

Deborah Rose-Milavec and Sr. Chris Schenk also visited several Vatican offices. At the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith they discussed restoring women to the diaconate. At the Congregation for Clergy they shared hopes that optional celibacy would soon become a reality. At the Synod of Bishops they asked that women theologians and theologians with families be consulted at the Synod on the Family.

At each office, they handed over pages and pages of signatures from Catholics committed to reform. In all, more than 26,000 signatures were presented. Pilgrimage participants also sent postcards and letters to these offices while Deb sent copies of FutureChurch’s Celebrating Women Witnesses in Spanish to Pope Francis with information about the many women leaders who are missing from the Lectionary.

Happily, Vatican Radio interviewed Sr. Chris Schenk to discuss the meaning of the pilgrimage and its impact on women’s lives in the Church today.

Stay tuned. FutureChurch is making plans to follow in the footsteps of early women leaders in Greece in October 2015. See details at futurechurch.org.

FutureChurch Workshop Supports NYC Parishioners

In late January Sr. Chris Schenk, and Sr. Kate Kuenstler were invited by Call To Action Metro-NY to educate New York City Catholics about their rights and responsibilities when facing a parish merger or closure. Kuenstler an independent canon lawyer, and Schenk the founding director of FutureChurch teamed up for a two hour workshop that attracted about 35 activist parishioners from Staten Island, Manhattan, Long Island and Brooklyn. It received advance and follow up media coverage from the Staten Island Live newspaper and an online feature article in the National Catholic Reporter.

In June, 2013 Cardinal Dolan announced that the archdiocese had contracted with The Reid Group, a company he said specializes “in assisting dioceses in their pastoral planning process.” According to Kuenstler’s research, The Reid Group has been contracted by more than a dozen dioceses to consult in parish closures and mergers. Both sisters warned of the bottom-line, corporate mentality that has pervaded some other diocesan reorganizations masterminded by The Reid Group. “It’s fundamentally a business organization restructuring for the sake of the institute of the diocese, rather than for the faith life of the people of God of the parish,” Kuenstler said. “This does not seem to be a pastoral model favored by Pope Francis,” said Schenk. “Too many bishops are treating parishes like Starbucks. The faith community needs to be respected. It’s not all about the money.”

Despite increases in the numbers of Catholics in the Archdiocese of New York, the nation and the world, dioceses nationwide are closing and merging parishes, mainly because there aren’t enough priests. “Because of the shortage of priests, there is a tendency on the part of bishops to shrink the number of parishes to fit the number of priests that they have,” Sister Christine said. “This is very backward, since in most places the faith community was there before there were ever priests.”

In late April, the 40-member Archdiocese advisory board working with The Reid group on the part of bishops sent its preliminary recommendations to local clusters. While its unclear how many of the Archdiocese’s 376 parishes are slated to close, officials acknowledge that it is likely to be many more than the 21 suppressed in 2007 amidst significant parishioner protest. The final decision is expected in September.
Catholics appeal to Pope over demeaning LCWR statement

Seventeen progressive Catholic organizations, including FutureChurch, have issued an Open Letter to Pope Francis asking him to intervene in the wake of harsh criticism of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) made on April 30 by Cardinal Gerhard Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF).

In the spring of 2012, the CDF issued a statement accusing LCWR of promoting “radical feminist themes” and “corporate dissent,” a move that caused outrage and widespread public prayer vigils supporting the sisters. FutureChurch played a central role in orchestrating support for U.S. Catholic sisters, 80 percent of whom are represented by LCWR.

In his April 30, 2014 statement, Cardinal Müller accused LCWR of not adhering to the harsh and unjust reform agenda imposed on the group two years ago. The statement also attacked renowned theologian Dr. Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ to whom LCWR is giving its 2014 Outstanding Leadership Award.

On May 15, the progressive Catholic coalition known as the NunJustice Project, asked Francis to intervene personally with Cardinal Müller and Archbishop Sartain instructing them to remove the unjust mandates imposed on LCWR over two years ago.

Noting Francis’ oft-repeated desire to expand leadership opportunities for women, the coalition wrote: “We respectfully suggest that the place to begin is to listen to faithful women who are already exercising leadership.”

In addition, the coalition said: “A public apology to Dr. Johnson and LCWR leadership would speak volumes about the institutional Church’s intent to truly listen to women and honor their voices.”

All 17 organizations are sending eblasts to constituents encouraging them to sign an online petition, and to send their own letters to Pope Francis with copies of the Spanish language versions of two of Dr. Johnson’s books: Consider Jesus and Quest for the Living God.

Links and resources available at www.nunjustice.org. At press time over 10,400 people signed the petition or downloaded personal letters to send.

St. Mary of Magdala:
Recalling Her Faithful Witness

This July, thousands will gather to celebrate the feast day of St. Mary of Magdala. FutureChurch invites organizers to focus on her role as witness to the most important event of our faith, the Resurrection.

The 2014 FutureChurch prayer service focuses on the theme, Mary of Magdala: Faithful Witness. This service illustrates her devotion as a disciple, her presence at the foot of the cross and tomb, and her commissioning as “Apostle to the Apostles.” We want to return to the roots of this project with materials focused on the truth of her witness and our call to be witnesses in today’s church. We hope this will help participants recognize their call to be witnesses sharing this call with their communities.

We raise up the faithful witness of Mary of Magdala as a model for the gender balance we seek in the church. We recommit ourselves to recover the truth of her role in the early church bringing her example to our communities. She is a model for faith filled leadership today.

This year we look forward, as we have for the past 17 years, to a growing number of celebrations, more than 350 worldwide. Organizers across the United States and in more than a dozen other countries join us in restoring the memory of this courageous woman leader and the inclusive community to which she is a prophetic witness.

If you are interested in hosting your own celebration, want to offer information on your gathering, or have pictures and highlights to share with us please visit futurechurch.org or email liz@futurechurch.org.

Mary Magdela gathering in Albany, New York.

Mary Magdela celebration in Cincinnati.

Mary Magdela Misereor cloth sent by Ugandan organizer.
The enthusiasm we have seen for Pope Francis over the last year is exceptional. Polls show that among American Catholics he has a 90% approval rating. He has garnered more than 12 million Twitter followers and even broke a Rolling Stones (yes, the rock band!) record by drawing more than three million people to an event in Rio de Janeiro. Our new pope is a media icon and “The Francis Effect” is commanding the attention of not only Catholics, but the global community. According to John Allen Jr., “It is a hardcore empirical, take-it-to-the-bank fact that in every corner of the world in which public opinion can be scientifically measured this pope has poll numbers that politicians and celebrities would sacrifice their children to pagan gods for.” There is good reason for this unprecedented attention; in Pope Francis we see the example of Jesus.

“**The Francis Effect**” is commanding the **attention of not only Catholics, but the global community...**

Our new pope is connecting with the greater community on the deepest level because he has a sincere commitment to serving the needs of the people rather than the politics of the Vatican. With his first papal act, Francis bowed to a cheering crowd and asked for the people to bless him. In doing so, he acknowledged the full humanity of every person as well as the necessity of community. His immediate rejection of the glamour of the papacy and ongoing efforts to walk with the disenfranchised has commanded the world’s attention. Pope Francis’ humility and commitment to social justice is Jesus-like. His willingness to engage the community, not to mention pose for a selfie here and there, demonstrates a ministry focused on the people.

**From the Program Desk: Liz England**

2014 has been a busy year and it is only half way through! Between Pope Francis’ confusing statements about the role of women and unexpected openness to dialogue about the future of priesthood we have much to do here in programming. As we continue to work for a church of justice and love with a truly inclusive table for all, I have been reminded that many of the people of God are already living the future of our church.

As part of the preparation of our spring teleconference I was fortunate to have a few conversations with Sr. Sandra Schneider; yes, we discussed the nuts and bolts of the program, but we also dialogued about authority and resistance. Each time we spoke, an invigorating energy hanging in the air, we shared ideas on how to grow and replicate the beautiful communities we see forming and thriving; parishes with priests who welcome lay preaching and leadership, women whose communities are supporting their call to the diaconate, groups who welcome all the baptized to join at the Eucharistic Table. I realized that the move beyond patriarchy is already happening, has happened, and we must work to recognize this beauty and help these seeds grow.

Impassioned in this new understanding I travelled to Sacramento, CA for the West Coast Call to Action Conference. The conference theme, “Empowering the People of God: A Prophetic Call to Justice,” was alive in the participants and presenters. I offered workshops on FutureChurch’s *A Million Voices Project* focusing on the call for us to recognize and resist abuse of authority in our communities and the institutional church. During our discussions I realized that while the practices of the hierarchy are too often oppressive, the hearts and hands of Catholics are working for justice. Whether advocating for women’s leadership roles, fair wages for workers, prison reform, an end to domestic violence, transparency in Vatican finances, or many other endeavors shared by participants, these empowered men and women are crying out with voices far more thunderous than their numbers would suggest.

As we move into the summer and the Feast Day celebrations of St. Mary of Magdala, I am renewed by the energy of those organizing celebrations in their communities. Empowering ourselves to act with conviction is at the foundation of our call as Catholics and is exemplified by St. Mary of Magdala. Though she trembled at the tomb, unsure how to proceed, she heard and recognized the voice calling her to act, to lead, to embolden her community. 2000 years later we are called to do the same.

Celebrate Priesthood Sunday on October 26, 2014! Resources available at www.futurechurch.org
Cardinal seeks a truce in fight between U.S. nuns and Vatican’s doctrinal office

Cardinal Joao Braz de Aviz, head of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, tried to defuse the damaging rift between the Vatican and U.S. nuns after a recent rebuke by the Cardinal Gerhard Müller over obedience and doctrinal differences. While the investigation falls under Cardinal Müller’s doctrinal office, but Braz de Aviz, who is seen as more sympathetic to the sisters, has tried to serve as a peace broker in the standoff. Because religious communities fall under his portfolio, his office is expected to have some role in the final outcome of the investigation. (washingtonpost.com, 05/20/14)

Cardinal Walter Kasper says women should have a more prominent voice at the upcoming Synod on the Family

Women should have a more prominent voice at the upcoming Synod on the Family, Cardinal Walter Kasper said. He also said that he regrets the absence of women in preparations for the three-week assembly in October. “A Church without women is like a mutilated body,” the cardinal said in a lengthy interview published in the Italian Catholic daily Avvenire. “Without them, parishes would close tomorrow.” Kasper remarked that it was “absurd” that women did not hold “high-level” positions in the Roman Curia. He said they could easily head the pontifical councils for family, laity, culture, communications and the new evangelization, as well as financial and administrative offices. He added that women should also be included, as consultants, in major discussions at the congregations dealing with education, saint-making, doctrine and consecrated life “since 80 percent of Religious are women.” (The Tablet, 03/08/14)

Francis encountering curial opposition, cardinal says

Speaking April 8 in St. Petersburg, Fla., Honduran Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga, one of Pope Francis’ closest advisors, stated, “There is a new way of thinking including the new way of governing in the church, here.” However, Rodrigues said, while Francis is popular among people around the world, he is facing opposition in the Roman Curia. “We have to be prepared, since this beautiful but strange popularity is beginning to strengthen adherences, but equally to awaken deaf opposition not only the old Curia, but in some who are sorry to lose privileges in treatment and comforts.” (National Catholic Reporter, 04/25 – 05/08/14)

Monongahela parishioners hold vigil, appeal to Vatican

Parishioners from St. Anthony’s parish have announced their intent to hire a canon lawyer and appeal Bishop David Zubik’s decision to close their Church. Laura Magone was the last to leave the Church after parishioners held a 24 hour vigil. She announced the formation of a new organization: the Society for the Preservation of St. Anthony’s Church. Bishop Zubik acknowledged the group’s right to appeal but characterized the vigil as an “embarrassment and a “scandal” (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 4/28/14) http://www.post-gazette.com/local/washington/2014/04/28/Church-closure-opponents-looking-for-Vatican-s-help/stories/201404280085

1000 Holland parishes to close by 2025

Cardinal Willem Eijk warned Pope Francis at an ad limina visit last December that two thirds of Holland’s 1500 parishes will close by 2025. Elk cited “drastic secularization” and dwindling congregations and collections, though the number of priests has dropped by 25% in the past eight years. Currently there are 743 priests for 1500 parishes. (The Tablet, 12/4/13) http://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/170/0/1-000-catholic-churches-in-holland-to-close-by-2025-pope-warned

Priest numbers halved in Galloway Scotland

The Diocese of Galloway has released figures showing the number of priests has more than halved since 1990, with the fall in churchgoers nearly as steep. Across the diocese, which covers most of south west Scotland, there is currently one priest for every two churches. In 1990 it had 55 priests for 53 churches. There are now 23 priests for 43 churches. The diocese has told parishioners that the situation is “no longer sustainable” and calls for “changes in mindset, in expectation and in structures”, an indication that many long-standing churches may have to be closed. (Scotland Sunday Herald 12/11/13 http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/church-closures-threat-as-priest-numbers-halved.22916292?utm_source=)

Welsh parishioners considering appeal

Parishioners from St. Mary’s Parish in Bangor, Wales are hoping to appeal the Easter Sunday closure of their Church, citing lack of due process in consulting them. Parishioner Sue Edwards said: “Unlike St. David’s, which was closed in January, St Mary’s has no financial or building maintenance problems.” The Bishop of Bangor, Rt Rev Andrew John, disagreed saying the buildings drain resources making it impossible to keep the churches open. (Daily Post North Wales 4/25/14) http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2014/05/holyoke_board_finalizes_propos.html

May 22, 2014 marked 20 years under John Paul II’s Ordinatio Sacerdotalis, reserving ordination to men only.

Learn how you can continue the conversation.

Order our A Million Voices resource that includes a three-part education program discussing Catholic teaching and the non-ordination of women. It includes a CD of the Georgetown debate Sr. Maureen Fiedler SL and Fr. Joseph Fessio SJ on the topic Can a Woman Receive the Sacrament of Orders.

Order online at futurechurch.org

Catholic Tipping Point is back!

Meet Fr. Tony Flannery

Founder of the Association of Catholic Priests in Ireland

Coming to a city near you!

Oct 21-November 19, 2014

Learn more at catholic tippingpoint.org

Children's Book Review:
By Rita Houlihan, FutureChurch Board of Trustee

The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name by Sally Lloyd-Jones, illustrations, Jago Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2007; 351 pages; ages 4 and up

This beautiful children's bible, rich with multi-ethnic illustrations and poetic language presents an energetic story of God's love. Sadly, I give it 2 out of 5 stars because it omits most of the women of salvation history and conflates Luke's 'Sinful Woman' with Mark's and John's 'Anointing Woman'. Sin and forgiveness along with God's love are constant themes. God delights in us but we become self-reliant and forget. Adam and Eve, created as equals (26) doubt God and sin. As they leave Eden, God whispers, “I will rescue you” (36) but also predicts hardships. Classic stories such as Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Rachel and Leah, and David and Goliath show God's people both believing and forgetting and God always loving.

A love poem from God (174) prepares for the coming of the Lord. Miracles of healing show Jesus “mending God’s broken world.” (220) A child's version of the “Our Father” (226) with the image of a girl running to her father telegraph the joy of faith. But then comes Luke's 'Sinful Woman' (280-285) conflated with, and diminishing the prophetic role of the real anointing woman whose precious ointment, not tears prepared Jesus for his burial. (Matthew 26, Mark 14, John 12) Jesus’ passion has enough detail to show the sadness, but not enough to terrify. Relief and joy jump off the page as a beaming resurrected Jesus appears to three faithful women. Later Mary Magdalene encounters Jesus when he calls her name, commissioning her to “…go and tell the others that I’m alive!” (314) Mary runs, exploding with this news of new life. (316-317)

Jesus promises a 'helper' (the Spirit). Female and male disciples wait in fear (327) but when the Spirit arrives (328) only men are depicted. The story ends delightfully with glimpses of the kingdom, free of sin with God's promise that “anyone who says yes to Jesus…[will be] born into…God always made them to be – Their own true selves.” (351) With more attention to the women leaders of salvation history (Tamar, Miriam, Rahab, Deborah, Naomi, Ruth, Bathsheba, Judith and Esther; Mary Magdalene, Tabitha of Joppa, Phoebe of Cenchreae, Lydia of Philippi, and Junia of Rome, to name only a few) this would be a special, unforgettable book.

By Sr. Diana Culbertson, FutureChurch Board of Trustee

Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love by Elizabeth Johnson; London: Bloomsbury, 2014

Elizabeth Johnson persuades us—to see, think, and act differently. She persuades us—which is different from merely urging us. In her exhaustive analysis of “the community of creation,” she brings us step by step from the earliest scientific study of the origins of life to the present ecological crisis. Warning: if you read this book thoughtfully, you cannot wiggle out of your responsibilities: Human agency is part of the evolutionary crisis. Scripture and moral theology urge the believer to participate energetically in an environmental struggle for salvation.

We have all heard of Charles Darwin. We have all referred to the Origin of Species familiarly as if what he wrote was common knowledge. It isn’t. Elizabeth Johnson’s long and detailed study of Darwin’s work is revelatory in many ways, most significantly in its stunning review of the theory of natural selection: Darwin’s analysis of plants and birds and insects, of their beaks and buds and colors, of their habitats and descendants. Like Darwin’s book itself, Johnson’s study is a sustained argument for a deeper awareness of our terrestrial community. Hers is a call for recognition of the community of creation described in scripture and attested to in every scientific analysis of earth and its inhabitants—in every study of the big Bang and its consequences. Calling our attention to the extinction of thousands of species, to the devastation of the earth caused by human activity and the moral imperative not just to care for the earth (the real meaning of dominion), but to love it passionately, Johnson leaves us no choice. Believers and unbelievers, scientists and poets—we are all in this together: we human persons along with the butterflies, the beasts, the rivers and the rocks, and the star that gives us our home. Absolving ourselves of responsibility to the world that God brings into existence and that formed the flesh of the body of Jesus is not an option.

Yes! I want to support the FutureChurch Mission and Vision

Give $100 or more and get a copy of Fr. Tony Flannery’s book, “A Question of Conscience” with our thanks!

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Mai to FutureChurch, 17307 Madison Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio 44107 or donate online at www.futurechurch.org
June 23 - 26, 2014 / St. Louis, MO
Visit the FutureChurch table at the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests meeting in St. Louis, MO.

July 22, 2014
Celebrate St. Mary of Magdala’s feastday! Download a free brochure, prayer service, or organizing kit by going to futurechurch.org.

July 22, 2014 / Cleveland, OH
Cleveland celebrates the feastday of St. Mary of Magdala
Join us at 7pm for Unheard Homilies. River’s Edge, 3430 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland Ohio. To learn more write liz@futurechurch.org

August 12 - 16, 2014 / Nashville, TN
Visit the FutureChurch table at the 2014 Leadership Conference of Women Religious Annual Assembly in Nashville, Tenn.

October 5 – 19, 2014 / Vatican City
Extraordinary Synod on the Family
FutureChurch takes its advocacy to Rome working to ensure the voices of Catholic families are adequately represented at the synod. Please do your part. Write to Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri urging him to include women theologians and theologians with families in the work of the Synod. Learn more at futurechurch.org or mycatholicfamily.org.

October 19 - November 21, 2014
FutureChurch, as part of the Catholic Tipping Point coalition, sponsors Fr. Tony Flannery, founder of the Association of Catholic Priests in Ireland for an eighteen-city tour in the United States discussing grassroots reform, the role of conscience and the future of the Catholic Church.

October 26, 2014
Celebrate Priesthood Sunday! Go to futurechurch.org to get your organizing kit!

November 7 - 9, 2014 / Memphis, TN
Call to Action Conference
Participate in three exciting FutureChurch workshops and visit our table of resources.

Support FutureChurch this Pentecost season! Give $100 or more and receive Fr. Tony Flannery’s book, A Question of Conscience” with our thanks! See form on page 7.

Quotable Quote:
“Passion for all that the Church can be deepens our commitment to stay at the table and talk through differences.”
LCWR Statement on meeting with CDF, May 8, 2014

Our US Postal PAPER newsletter is now being printed just two or three times each year. Please sign up TODAY for our indepth monthly E-Newsletter at www.futurechurch.org

FutureChurch Fall Event
September 19, 2014 6pm - 9pm
Trinity Cathedral
2230 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH  44115

Pope Francis’ Catholicism: Reform from the Ground Up
with Interfaith Voices radio host, Sr. Maureen Fiedler, SL speaking about state of reform under Pope Francis

Trivison Award recipient
Dr. Jennifer Haselberger
telling her courageous story of confronting church officials regarding unreported clergy sex abuse in the diocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis

Dont’ miss out on this great evening! Join us in person or buy a virtual ticket!
Call 216.228.0869 x 5
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Visit www.futurechurch.org

A LOOK AHEAD