PLEASE SUPPORT FUTURECHURCH DURING OUR PENTECOST CAMPAIGN

FOCUS E-News: June 12 - 24, 2018 Edition

PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT OUR WORK!
TAKE OUR SHORT SURVEY!

Please take the FutureChurch Survey!

Sign up for our newsletter

From the Executive Director

It's been a rich and inspiring ten days as I traveled to Slovakia and Poland for international meetings with priest associations, lay reform organizations, theologians, activists, historians, and women's collectives working for reform in the Catholic Church.

In Slovakia our work together was inspired by the stories of Catholics who, through the underground Church, lived and organized resistance against an authoritarian regime after WWII. The stories of their courage and commitment were transforming. I saw my own resistance to injustice within the institutional church with new eyes, recognizing that this work of love within the institution is worth the struggle. See our press release below for
In Poland, forty Catholic women, some from Poland and others from the Czech Republic, gathered to share their stories of courage and resistance to the injustices within the Catholic Church. Amazingly, most of these women were 35 years and younger -- another sign of hope!

Women in the group, whether from India, Poland or the Czech Republic, share the same tenacious force for change within the Catholic Church. Among them were gifted journalists, educators, theologians, conductors/composers, physicians, scholars, and activists. These women are the "cream of the crop" in their respective countries and truly change agents for the Gospel.

Astrid Lobo Gajiwala, an activist, educator, and doctor from India, shared her experience in developing the Gender Policy of the Catholic Church in India. Kate McElwee, Executive Director of Women's Ordination Conference, shared the history and work of Women's Ordination Conference.

As the final speaker, I shared the work of FutureChurch and our collaborations that have engendered change. Among other things, I extended an invitation to the women of Poland and the Czech Republic to preach for Catholic Women Preach.

I returned home with a renewed sense of determination for our common work. Energized by women who continue to bear faith-filled witness to the Gospel and reminded of the need for full equality and participation of women within the Catholic Church, my passion is rekindled and my heart filled with love. These words of Julian of Norwich kept running through my mind as I flew home, "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well."

Deborah Rose-Milavec
Executive Director

From the Associate Director

Advocacy Opportunity: Keep the Woman of Mark 5:25-34 in the Proclamation of the Gospel

On Sunday July 1, 2018 – the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B) – your pastor is given the option to omit a woman from the proclamation of the Gospel. Mark 5:25-34 recounts the
story of “a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years,”
who – armed only with her great faith – musters the courage to
push through the crowd to touch Jesus’ cloak and be healed. And
it’s optional. Given the challenges that we face as individuals,
families, communities, and as a world and Church it would be a
grave injustice to all the faithful to omit this important part of the
text. And I encourage you to reach out to your priest, pastor, or
faith community leader, urging them to proclaim and preach on this
important exchange.

The unnamed woman shows tremendous faith and courage. She
knew deep down that there was more to life than suffering. And
so, she steps out, at great personal risk and against social and
religious norms, in the hope that she would be healed and finally
find freedom from her suffering. We need this woman. In her story,
I hear the story of those who are right now suffering sexual
harassment and violence hoping that someone will believe them; I
hear the story of those who wander alone in the darkness of
mental illness looking for support; I hear the story of women and
men who with their children are fleeing violence and exploitation in
search of a better life for their families; I see the tiny hands of
children separated from their parents reaching out for them; I hear
the story of young LGBTQ people struggling to come out; I hear
the stories of Catholic women who have discerned a call to
ordained ministry and are looking for an opportunity to respond
faithfully. We need to hear all these stories (and more) in this
unnamed woman’s story. And those who suffer any kind of
marginalization or oppression deserve her witness of conviction
and faith that things could be different and her model of courage
to step out. Most importantly, they deserve the healing and
liberation that God intends for them and that was given to her.

This exchange also gives Jesus the opportunity to teach us about
power. Jesus was “aware at once that power had gone out from
him” when the woman touched his cloak. To be clear, Jesus had all
the power in this situation. We all have power. Admittedly some of
us have more worldly power than others. But we all would do well
to be aware of our power and examine how we use it: What words
do I use? How do I spend my money and time? What perspectives
do I listen to? Whom do I acknowledge? Whom do I welcome?
Whom do I lift up? Whom do I silence? Our religious and political
leaders – who wield incredible worldly power – can learn from this
Jesus who, aware of his power, chooses to use it not to put people
down or keep people out but to lift them up, invite them in, and
make them a part of the story.

Jesus also shows us the immeasurable power of compassionate
presence and proximity to those who need us – regardless of who
they are, under what circumstances they come to us, or what it
might cost us to respond to them in love. This is a power that each
of us has regardless of our worldly power. We need this example
from Jesus. The victims of suffering and oppression need to know
that there are Christ-like people who will listen to them,
acknowledge them, believe them, and help them. We who strive to
be Christ-like people need to be reminded of this Jesus when others reach out to us for help, healing, or liberation. Like Jesus, we need to be willing to prioritize the human person in our midst over the social and religious constructs, customs, and norms of our time and respond to them in love. We need this Jesus who reminds us that no person is illegal.

This past week our nation and the world witnessed first-hand just how dangerous giving only part of the biblical picture can be when the administration attempted to justify their unjust and immoral policy of separating children from their parents at the border using a line from Romans. Of course, Christians who know better know that the passage continues on to tell us that “Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:10). Mercifully a chorus of voices stood up, spoke out, and proclaimed the fullness of the Christian faith.

Those of us who work in Church reform and renewal have long been familiar with the damage that is done when passages about women are omitted from the proclamation of Scripture at liturgy, are made “optional,” or are moved to weekdays when fewer Catholics will hear about these women. You can learn more about these and other ways women are omitted from our lectionary from this article by Ruth Fox, OSB.

And so, this week I invite you to reach out to your priest, pastor, or faith community leader. Remind them why it’s so important that this woman’s encounter with Jesus be proclaimed and preached about on Sunday, July 1st.

Russ Petrus
Associate Director

---

**Press Release from International Catholic Reform Network meeting in Slovakia**

Fifty Catholics from 18 countries and 4 continents gathered near Bratislava, Slovakia from June 11 – 15, 2018. Formed as the International Catholic Reform Network (icrn.info) in 2013, the participants of this year’s conference learned from members of the former Czechoslovak Underground Church about positive resistance.

The group was inspired by the testimonials of the people who endured severe oppression under the communist regime of that time.
“We value the courageous acts of Bishop Davidek and others who recognized the pastoral need to bring the sacraments to communities of faith,” said Peter Krizan of the group OK21 – Society for Open Christianity for the 21st Century. “We need to endure and be vigilant, so that we do not miss 21st Century’s Pentecost,” Krizan added.

“Their courage, integrity, and willingness to take risks for freedom and the ongoing life of the Church is awe inspiring,” said Deborah Rose-Milavec, executive director of FutureChurch, a reform organization in the United States.

“We are pained by the double oppression these people of conscience suffered at the hands of their government and the Church, particularly the women who were ordained during this time” said Kate McElwee, Executive Director of Women’s Ordination Conference in the United States.

“By refusing to collaborate with the regime, these people found new ways to be church together and to live the works of the Gospel,” said Martha Heizer, board member of We Are Church International. “We strive to follow in their footsteps.” Following the Revolution of 1989, as political freedom became a growing reality, the official Church regressed to its discriminatory practices and refused to recognize the faculties of several of those ordained in the Underground Church, particularly followers of Bishop Davidek.

“Inspired by the Underground Church movement we seek to realize a more radical, inclusive, synodal, ecumenical, and justice-seeking Church,” said Markus Heil, Chair of the Pfarrei-Initiative in Switzerland and moderator of the conference. “In our discussions, some were still hoping that the church will change and others have given up on the current institution but are still engaged for the faith of the people.

“In a two-fold strategy, the reform movements will continue to support Pope Francis’ reform approach and at the same time, foster new ways of leading Christian parishes as equals on a grass root level,” said Christian Weisner, board member of We Are Church Germany. “We strongly support the substantial reforms Pope Francis is implementing against strong resistance within the church hierarchy.”, he emphasized.

The ICRN members, in order to meet the needs of the People of God, commit to the work of women’s equality in the Church, LGBTQI rights and inclusion, empowering Catholics to claim their fundamental rights and responsibilities, and support the creation of new models for parish and Christian community life.

“I am impressed and glad to see that the working groups will continue their work and cooperation across such great distances,” said Fr. Helmut Schueller, Speaker of the Austrian Parish Priests Initiative.
Participants of the Conference came from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, South Korea, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United States. Italy and Kenya had to cancel their prearranged attendance at short notice. Read more

International Catholic Reform Network signs statement in time for World Meeting of Families

Statement on LGBT Issues at the 2018 World Meeting of Families in Dublin, Ireland: Adopted by the International Church Reform Network [ICRN], June 14, 2018

The Vatican’s World Meeting of Families [WMF], to be held in August in Dublin, Ireland, needs to send clear signals that ALL families, including LGBT families will be welcomed. Just as Pope Francis has been meeting regularly with survivors of sexual abuse to listen to their stories, we call on him to meet LGBT families, who have long suffered from another form of clerical abuse.

Moreover, LGBT families should be invited to make presentations as part of the official program so that the other participants, and indeed the whole Church, can hear their stories. What arrangements are being made to guarantee that at least one of the five families who will give witness at WMF will be an LGBT family? Will the program include any parents who have LGBT children? Will a same-gender couple testify about the joys and difficulties of raising children? Will participants hear from a transgender person about their experience of family? Will even one such event happen?

We are doubtful when we remember that the WMF organizers withdrew any reference to LGBT families from their promotional literature. The Association of Catholics in Ireland, We Are Church Ireland, and Ireland’s Association of Catholic Priests have all expressed disappointment at deletions from the initial booklet that was to be sent to parishes as a discussion guide. A photograph showing two women hugging, one of whom had a rainbow flag drawn on her hand and a text that acknowledged the Church’s ideal of marriage as between a man and a woman but noted that “other unions exist which provide mutual support” were removed from the booklet—presumably at considerable financial cost. Furthermore, a promotional video by a native Irish bishop was censored because he acknowledged LGBT families.

Despite these unfortunate beginnings, we are filled with optimism by encouraging statements regarding LGBT people and the WMF
from three of Ireland’s bishops (Bishop Brendan Leahy of Limerick, Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh, and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin), as well as the influential Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Vienna. Pope Francis himself lifts our expectations because we believe his heart is always open to the oppressed and his ears are ever ready to listen to the cries of the poor.

We remain hopeful that the WMF will not be found wanting in practicing, as well as preaching, the Gospel by going to the margins. We are optimistic that all people will be brought to the table and all voices will be heard.

If the WMF in Dublin is to be experienced as a crucial time for the kind of social dialogue advocated by Pope Francis, then the Church needs to be assured that “all are welcome” becomes more than the title of a liturgical hymn.

For further information, contact Jeannine Gramick: gramick@juno.com

The above statement was adopted at the fourth conference of the International Catholic Reform Network gathered in Pezinok near Bratislava, Slovakia, June 11–15, 2018. Fifty Catholics from 18 countries and 4 continents participated in the conference. Participants came from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, South Korea, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United States. Italy and Kenya had to cancel their prearranged attendance at short notice.

**Women as heads of dicasteries - but no women priests according to Francis**

Elise Harris reports that Pope Francis said more space has to be created for women to take on leading roles in the Roman Curia, but that priestly ordination is not an option.

Responding to a question about women's ordination to the priesthood, the pope said “there is the temptation to 'functionalize' the reflection on women in the Church, what they should do, what they should become.”

However, Francis stressed that while the priesthood is out, women do need to be given more opportunities for leadership in the Roman Curia – a view he said has at times been met with resistance. “I had to fight to put a woman as the vice-director of the press
office,” he said, referring to his decision in 2016 to name Spanish journalist Paloma García Ovejero as the Vatican’s deputy spokesperson.

He said he at one point offered a woman the job of heading the Vatican’s Secretariat for Communications, but she turned it down because “she already had other commitments.”

Women in the Curia “are few, we need to put more,” he said, adding that it can be either a religious sister or a laywoman, “it doesn’t matter,” but there is a need to move forward with an eye for quality and competency in the job.

“I don't have any problem naming a woman as the head of a dicastery, if the dicastery doesn't have jurisdiction,” he said, referring to the fact that some Vatican departments have specific functions in Church governance that require a bishop to do the job. Lay men are also ineligible to oversee offices that require the jurisdictional authority of a priest or bishop. Read more

**Working document for Synod is out...hopeful**

Joshua McElwee reports that the new *Instrumentum Laboris*, or the working document for the October synod takes a more pastoral approach to young Catholics who disagree with some Church teachings.

Noting that some younger believers disagree with the church on contraception, abortion, or same-sex marriage, for example, it acknowledges that many of them also "express the desire to remain part of the Church."

Later, the document makes what appears to be the Vatican's first use of one of the preferred acronyms for the gay community, stating that "some LGBT youth ... wish to 'benefit from greater closeness' and experience greater care from the Church."

Nicolas Seneze writes that the document is the work of young Catholics who attended the pre-synod conference.

According to Francis DeBernardo of New Ways Ministry, the Vatican for the first time used the acronym “LGBT” to describe individuals with diverse sexualities and gender identities. Similar to 2013 when Pope Francis became the first pope to use the word “gay,” this change in language signals that church officials are beginning to understand that they have to treat LGBT people with simple respect by referring to them with more accurate terms.

Another significant development is the acknowledgement that LGBT people have a desire to be part of the church. In one section, the document states: “some LGBT youth ... wish to benefit from greater closeness and experience greater care from the Church."
DignityUSA asks Catholics to speak truth to power

Just weeks before World Meeting of Families 2018, a Vatican event that has been plagued with mixed messages about whether same-sex couples and families of LGBTQI people will be welcome, Pope Francis projected a very narrow view of what family is. In remarks to the Italian group Forum delle Famiglie, the Pope is reported to have said, "It is painful to say this today: People speak of varied families, of various kinds of family," but "the family [as] man and woman in the image of God is the only one."

Leaders of DignityUSA, the organization of Catholics working for justice, equality and full inclusion of LGBTQI people in the church and society, reacted to this statement with anger and disappointment. "Once again, the Pope is making a sweeping statement that is not grounded in reality, or even in good theology," said Marianne Duddy-Burke, DignityUSA's Executive Director. "Humans form families in a myriad of ways. For the Pope to say that only one model can reflect the Divine image is wrong and damaging to countless people all across the globe."

"Furthermore," Duddy-Burke continued, "we are mystified by the sudden turns in the tone and content of statements by Pope Francis on LGBTQI people and issues. Recently we heard reports that he told a Chilean survivor of sexual abuse that God made him gay and loves him as he is. These reports have not been denied by the Vatican. If true, how is it then wrong for an LGBTQI person to form a family rooted in love and care for its members, which may also include children?"

Sign the petition telling Pope Francis that "love makes a family."

Pope Francis removes Cardinal McCarrick

In a shocking announcement, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who served as the archbishop of Newark, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C., before retiring in 2006, has announced that he is stepping down from active ministry after allegations of sexual abuse were found "credible and substantiated."
Virginia Saldanha on why women matter

FutureChurch is blessed to have Virginia Saldanha as a member of our Women in Church Leadership Committee with her long history of activism for women's rights in the Catholic Church and in society.

She spoke to Matters India on the eve of International Women’s Day on March 8. Here is a bit of her recent interview in Matters India.

Virginia Saldanha, a lay Catholic woman theologian, is the secretary of the Indian Christian Women’s Movement and the Indian Women Theologians Forum. The Mumbai-based activist has represented laity, family and women’s issues in organizations of Asian and Indian bishops.

Matters India: How does “International Women’s Day” matter in India today?

Virginia Saldanha: International Women’s Day continues to be important as it is an opportunity to raise awareness on the status of women in our country. Some women are comfortable and therefore are unaware of the reality of women who suffer violence. They could be a neighbour, a colleague, or even a relative but lack of awareness and sensitivity could blind them to the reality.

Women in urban areas have no clue how their counterparts in rural areas struggle with poverty, low caste social status, or strong cultural bias against their gender. Culture continues to bind the poor woman in urban areas as her shift to the city has not liberated her from her cultural background unless she joins a group or has access to an NGO that helps her make the shift. Read more

In case you missed it: Fighting for the rights of women religious

Jose Kavi writes that a recent article in a Vatican magazine on widespread exploitation of nuns in the Catholic Church has found many takers in India, home to the world’s largest number of women religious.

“A welcome statement but late in coming,” Sister Teresa Kotturan, former vice president of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, reacted to the March 1 article in the monthly, “Women, Church, World.”

Father Paul Thelakat, who has arbitrated several disputes
between nuns and priests in Kerala, southern India, too says the “cry of the magazine from Rome is too late.”

Nevertheless, the fact that an official Vatican publication has “come out with some painful truth within the Church” has cheered Presentation Sister Shalini Mulackal, the first woman to head the predominantly male Indian Theological Association. The article in the monthly women’s magazine of the Vatican newspaper L’Osservatore Romano is based on the comments of several unnamed nuns. It describes the drudgery of nuns who work as cooks, cleaners, waiters on tables for cardinals, bishops and priests. It also narrates how some work in the residences of “men of the Church, waking at dawn to prepare breakfast and going to sleep once dinner is served.”

They also keep the house of priests and bishops in order and clean and iron the laundry for them for “random and often modest” remuneration.

The situation is no better in India where patriarchal norms and culture in the Church and society shackle women religious, says Sister Kotturan, who once headed the Indian province of the congregation based in Kentucky, United States. She is currently the NGO Representative at the UN Sisters of Charity Federation. Sister Mulackal says several nuns in India manage kitchen and household affairs in church run institutions and seminaries.

Seminarians who get used to sisters serving them do not grow up in respecting sisters as consecrated persons like them. “But instead they look at them as mere servants. Unfortunately this mentality is carried on when they become parish priests. They order around even if the religious sister is much senior to them” she adds.

Read more

**USCCB voter guide is still pre-Francis**

Brian Rowe reports that after nearly 90 minutes of fraternal debate about the future of their quadrennial voter guide, the U.S. bishops opted to supplement rather than revise or replace the current document, resisting a push from a group of bishops who viewed the current version as outdated in light of “a radically different moment” brought by the presidency of Donald Trump.

The bishops voted 144 to 41 (the vote was 210 to 21 in 2015), with two abstentions, to complement the current edition of "Forming Consciences for Good Public Policy" with materials "specifically prepared" to address the “unprecedented” political climate, such as the Trump administration’s international travel ban, policies regarding immigration, and the rollback of environmental and civil rights protections. The bishops asked for "clear, consistent and unambiguous guidance" from the pope on these issues, including "a clear explanation of Catholic social teaching on immigration and refugees, human rights, and the environment, beginning with the encyclical letters Laudato Si' and Fratelli Tutti.”
Thomas Reese, SJ wonders why the bishops — who think of themselves as teachers — have an easier time reaching agreement on their opposition to, or support of, specific government programs than in agreeing on a teaching document for their people.

James Martin SJ will speak at World Meeting of Families on LGBTQI inclusion

James Martin's appearance at the World Meeting of Families has been seen as a concession to those demanding that LGBT families be fully represented at the meeting.

Michael O'Loughlin writes that he will touch down in an Ireland that used the ballot box to express its dissatisfaction with the Catholic Church’s views on sexuality, ushering in same-sex marriage via popular vote in 2015. The decision, along with last month’s vote in support of legalizing abortion, highlighted the chasm that has grown between Irish citizens and the church.

But in an effort to bridge that gap, organizers of the World Meeting of Families announced on Monday that James Martin, S.J., an editor at America known in recent years for his ministry to L.G.B.T. Catholics, would speak at the August event.

“The organizers have asked me to speak about how parishes can welcome L.G.B.T. Catholics, as well as their parents and families. So I hope to share ‘best practices’ from parishes that have successfully reached out to the L.G.B.T. Catholic community,” Father Martin told America. Read more

The Value of the C-9

Robert Mickens argues that while the C-9 council that advises Pope Francis is a worthy effort to overcome the overly-centralized authority of the pope, it is composed of some questionable characters.

The council will meet again soon and Mickens writes that not all nine cardinal-members will be at next week’s meetings. Cardinal George Pell, for example, will once again be absent. The last time he attended a C9 gathering was in June 2017.
Since then he has missed four appointments (this will be the fifth), after being granted a leave of absence from his Vatican duties – including as prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy – in order to return to his native Australia and “defend himself” against charges of “historical sexual assault offences.”

Many are insisting that at least another controversial member on the council should be sacked immediately. That is Cardinal Francisco Javier Errázuriz, the former Archbishop of Santiago de Chile (1998-2010).

The cardinal, who is now 84, has had a remarkable and – as we have recently discovered in new and ugly detail – very checkered career, especially by allegedly covering up sexual abuse by one of Chile’s most notorious offenders, Fernando Karadima.

"Errázuriz knew all about the Karadima case. The 700-page report to the CDF (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) that finally resulted in Karadima’s ecclesial censure was submitted on his watch.

"He repeatedly delayed the administration of justice for Karadima while he was archbishop,” noted one of our recent articles on the unfolding sex abuse scandal in Chile.

In fact, the cardinal had for years refused to even listen to complaints against the former priest. Many are asking how it is possible that Pope Francis can still keep him as one of his closest advisors.

But it appears that Errázuriz will stay. Read more

**More laity needed to fight clericalism that leads to clergy sex abuse**

Crux reports that few people in Australia can say they are more on the front lines in picking up the pieces after the recently concluded Royal Commission into Institutional Sexual Abuse that was highly critical of the Catholic Church than Archbishop Mark Coleridge, elected as president of the country’s bishops’ conference last month.

Despite the challenges, which also include trials of two of Australia’s most renowned clerics, Archbishop Philip Wilson in Adelaide and Cardinal George Pell, the Vatican’s finance czar, Coleridge is convinced that when it comes to fighting clerical sexual abuse, a “change in culture” is needed and is already in motion.

“There’s absolutely no room for complacency, but there is room for encouragement,” Coleridge told Crux on Monday in Rome.
The Australian prelate is in the eternal city this week to participate in the “Anglophone Safeguarding Conference,” a yearly gathering taking place since the early 2000s, bringing together bishops’ conferences from the English-speaking world under the aegis of Rome’s Centre for Child Protection at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

Among other things, Coleridge spoke with Crux about the role of the laity in addressing the problem, because if “there had been more lay people involved in decision making roles in times past, we wouldn’t have the catastrophe on our hands that we now have.”

Read more

Men Reviewing Men

Anthony Domestico has not reviewed the writings of women authors throughout his career. He writes that he is proud of the work he has done as a critic over the past ten years but regrets the homogeneity of the authors he has written on.

"But besides embarrassment, I also feel curiosity. What could explain the strange fact that it took seven years for an editor to assign me a female writer? I’m a liberal critic writing for liberal publications. How did this go on for so long?" Read more

Grand jury reports on clergy sex abuse and coverup in six dioceses in Pennsylvania

New! THE 2018 MARY OF MAGDALE CELEBRATION RESOURCE IS READY!

Inspired by the global Women's Marches and aware that our religious institutions and the world are in dire need of an infusion of feminist energy and truth, our theme for 2018 is "Celebrating Feminism and Faith in Union.

New! URGE U.S. BISHOPS TO REFORM SEMINARY PROGRAMS

Recently the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests (AUSCP) sent a letter to Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.SS.R. and the USCCB asking for a major overhaul of their programs for priestly
in Union." Find everything you will need to celebrate the Feast of St. Mary of Magdala in your community or parish. Download 2018 resource

Download the 2018 Mary of Magdala Celebration Packet

FutureChurch supports the AUSCP campaign and asks Catholics to contact Cardinal Tobin and the Committee to express their concerns.

Download resource

New! LISTENING TO WOMEN
Join the Conversation!

Pentecost is a time when we open our hearts and minds to the movement of God's Spirit.

Today, women in the Church are looking for opportunities to express the fullness of God’s presence in them as human beings created in the image and likeness of God. Through Listening to Women, we a) create safe spaces where women can talk about the celebrations and challenges they experience as women in the Catholic Church; then b) share those reflections with our Bishops to help create opportunities for greater understanding and inclusion in Church life. Learn more

Please support this work as we celebrate the Spirit of Pentecost!

CATHOLIC WOMEN DEACONS RETREAT

Join us for our third retreat as Catholic women come together to discern and explore the call to the permanent diaconate!

Sign the Open Letter to Pope Francis Urging More Effective Collaboration with Women
Catholic Women Speak and Voices of Faith invite Catholic women to sign an open letter to Pope Francis urging him to collaborate more effectively with women and to use language that expresses the pressing need for full equality for women.

Donate $125 or more and receive a copy of Kaya Oakes book, *The Nones Are Alright: A New Generation of Believers, Seekers, and Those in Between*

Start a conversation about women deacons with DeaconChat!

More women are sharing their stories of being called to the diaconate. Share your story at our 100 Women Deacons campaign!

Catholic Women Preach expands!

We are excited to tell you about **two new features** we've just added to help you get the most out of Catholic Women Preach.

**THE CWP PODCAST**

Many of our regular viewers have been asking for and suggesting ways to listen to audio-only versions of the reflections on Catholic Women Preach. They want to benefit from the fine preaching, insights, and wisdom these women have to offer whether they're at home or on the go.

And so we're glad to announce that **recent and all upcoming preaching will now be offered as a podcast**. Best of all, when you subscribe you'll have the audio version waiting for you as soon as it is added.

**Listen and subscribe on the most popular platforms:**

Apple Podcasts Overcast Pocket Casts RadioPublic CastBox

**SEARCH CWP**
As our archive of preaching grows, many of those who work in religious education, adult formation, RCIA, high schools, campus ministry and other ministries have asked for a way they can search for preaching that touches on a particular theme or topic.

You may have already noticed the new search bar at the top of the page (or in the menu if you're using a mobile device). **All you need to do is type in your search term and press enter to get the most relevant search results.** You can search for a particular preacher, a particular feast day, a topic or issue, or a scripture (using the standard abbreviations).

**THANK YOU**
We really hope that these two enhancements help you get even more out of the faithfilled reflections of all the women who preach for us. And we thank you for your feedback, continued viewership, and support! In our efforts to continually enhance this ministry, we invite you to consider **taking our survey** and **contributing financially.**

Of course, be sure to connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and share the gift of Catholic women preaching with your friends and networks!

---

**Be inspired! Catholic Women Preach!**

[Please support this effort!](#)
Over 147,000 views! PLEASE SUPPORT CATHOLIC WOMEN PREACH!

Please take the Catholic Women Preach survey and help us to make this exciting initiative even better!

Learn what you can do to save your parish community

New! International priests statistics!

U.S. Priest statistics

New! Emerging Models of Parish and Community Life 2017 - 2018 SERIES