From the Executive Director

Please take the FutureChurch Survey!

None of this work for reform in the Catholic Church is possible without Catholics like you who engage in these efforts for, not only yourselves, but for your children, your grandchildren, and all those who will carry on the essential work of the Gospel after this generation is gone.

As we come to an end of the fiscal year, we stop to take stock of our work and re-visit our priorities as we move forward.

To that end, we want to know what you think. Please take the time to fill out a very short survey so you can let us know what concerns you have and your priorities in terms of addressing those concerns. We value your opinion and the shape of our work is dependent on your hopes, dreams and visions.

Thank you for taking the time to share your vision with us!

PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY
Good preaching consoles, challenges, and inspires me. It consoles by giving me something I want – or even need – to hear. That “something” might be a word that comforts me in a difficult time or a message that lets me know I’m on track in my pursuit of better discipleship. It challenges me by giving me a question to consider, by surfacing a previously held belief or opinion to reconsider, or by pointing out behavior I need to change. And it inspires me by helping me to see that I’m not in this Christian life alone, but that there are others walking similar journeys.

This weekend, the preaching at Catholic Women Preach offered by Fordham professor Jeannine Hill Fletcher on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ delivered and I encourage you to check it out for yourself.

As I read about and see images of the injustice and bloodshed plaguing our world, I’m increasingly frustrated and disheartened by the lack of prophetic leadership in the hierarchy of the U.S. Church. And so after reading statements from our bishops about who can and cannot receive Eucharist and after hearing friends in ministry share their tales of the liturgical trials and tribulations that come with preparing for their bishop to come to their parish for Confirmation, it consoles me to hear Jeannine Hill Fletcher say, “When Christians drink the cup of the covenant, we insert ourselves in the final meal of the One who gave over his body and his blood in the stand against the systems of violence in his world, committing his blood to reveal that things could be different.” Amen! I needed to hear that. THIS is what Eucharist is about. Not who’s in or who’s out or which vessels are suitable and which ones aren’t.

As I reflected more deeply on her words, a challenge emerged for me too. “Truly contemplating the blood that flows from the Crucified One, we’re drawn deep into the mystery of violence in which all humanity participates; we are indicted in the bloodshed that surrounds us; our works are indeed dead if we think that they exempt us from the bloody violence that is perpetuated in our name,” she says. And I realize in a new way that I haven’t done enough to take a stand against the violence done in my name. For me, praying, posting/reposting on social media, signing petitions and voting isn’t enough. Deep down I know there’s more that I could and should be doing.
And that challenge would feel overwhelming if it weren’t for the cloud of witnesses that Jeannine offers as inspiration: “In 1953, Mamie Till raised her son Emmett to an international gaze when she had the courage to show how the sin of White supremacy made the blood of her only son flow to his death. In 2018, from out of the aftermath of the blood that flowed from a code red active shooter, Emma Gonzalez had the courage to name how blood is meant for life. In Charlottesville, and Philadelphia, and New York City, people are finding the courage to stand and to march, to show up and stand against the blood the flows from White insecurities and White supremacies which refuse to acknowledge that Black Lives Matter. Christians are committing to the life blood of fathers, uncles and mothers threatened when ICE decides that no space is sacred. In response to the triple threat of racism, materialism and militarism, the many movements in our day carry on the work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King who witnessed with his blood what it looks like to be in covenantal relationship with the God who dwells in human beings, responding to violence with peace; even if it means giving over one’s life.”

Good preaching consoles, challenges and inspires me. And I believe it has the power to change us as individuals and as a community of believers. And together as disciples we can give witness to and help to build up the world the Creator intended: “Christ our torture victim and his most precious blood calls deeply to us to consider that our security comes from God alone, and that we are called to be Christ-followers by giving over our lives to the witness that a different world is possible.”

What does good preaching do for you? What do you believe it does for our church and our world?

Russ Petrus
Associate Director

**US Bishops get warning of complacency in clergy sex abuse**

Brian Rowe reports that The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, or CARA, at Georgetown University collects information from the dioceses and eparchies on new allegations of sexual abuse of minors and the clergy against whom these allegations were made.

The full report is available on the bishops' conference website. During the auditing period, 654 adults in 129 dioceses and eparchies brought forth 695 allegations; 173 have been found substantiated, 242 remained in an ongoing investigation and 30
were found unsubstantiated.

Those overall allegation numbers are nearly half those reported in the 2016 audit, what the auditors attribute to fewer bankruptcy proceedings and changes in state statute of limitations laws. Of the allegations, 24 allegations came from current minors. Six of those have been substantiated, four stemming from the same priest, and the accused priests have been removed from ministry, according to the CARA survey report. Another eight allegations were found unsubstantiated, while five more remained under investigation at the time of the audit's conclusion. Three allegations were classified as "unable to be proven."

In his letter accompanying the report, Francesco Cesareo, chairman of the National Review Board, which advises the bishops on the issues of child and youth protection, said the audit's results demonstrate "an ongoing commitment" by the U.S. bishops to ensuring the charter's provisions are implemented.

But Cesareo also renewed concern he's raised in recent years of a sense of complacency becoming more apparent toward child protection.

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

Mark Dent reports that Pennsylvania State Rep. Mark Rozzi is one of dozens of witnesses to testify over the last two years as the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office completes an investigation into six of Pennsylvania's eight dioceses. Later this month, the office is expected to release a report of 800-plus pages detailing widespread sexual abuse and cover-ups. The report is to come a few weeks after an Erie priest was indicted for sexual assault and two years after another presentment for the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese was released.

This grand jury presentment will feature information on the dioceses of Allentown, Erie, Greensburg, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh and Scranton. The six dioceses have already been given copies of the grand jury report ahead of the public, though they and the Attorney General's Office have remained mum on the contents.

Pennsylvania has dealt with major sexual abuse scandals before, not only those involving the Catholic Church. The Jerry
Sandusky scandal at Pennsylvania State University led to convictions for assault by the former assistant football coach and for cover-ups by three prominent university officials. And recent accusations have been leveled against the now-resigned director of the Cadets, a renowned drum corps based in Allentown.

With misbehavior and cover-ups from the Catholic Church and others as a backdrop, Rozzi has been trying for six years to get Pennsylvania to eliminate the statute of limitations for civil and criminal cases involving child sexual abuse, facing stiff opposition from Catholic lobbyists.

He noted the breadth of this current investigation into the Catholic Church is far larger than any previous inquiries and warns, based on conversations with nuns and victims, that the result will be severe.

"This will probably be the worst grand jury report in the history of the United States on sexual abuse," Rozzi said. Read more

In case you missed it: Interim report on Pope Francis' progress

Christian Weisner of We are Church International analyzes Pope Francis's progress with skill. In his article for the National Catholic Reporter he scores the pope on a number of issues.

Scorecard on the issues

Laity: From the beginning, Francis has emphasized the importance of the people of the church, the so-called laity. The laypeople are the protagonists of the church and the world. The ecclesiastical hierarchy is called to serve them, not to use them. Here we see a completely different picture of the church than the monarchical and strictly hierarchical tradition: a picture of the church that finally corresponds to the communion theology of Vatican II.

Celibacy: Francis seems to be open to repealing mandatory celibacy for Roman Catholic priests. He has suggested he would consider ordaining "married men of proven quality" (viri probati). Although these statements are still vague, they are an important signal that an open debate is possible. Now it is up to the bishops, not to complain about the lack of priests to serve the pastoral needs of their diocese, but to send "brave and bold proposals" to Rome, as Francis told Bishop Erwin Kräutler in 2014.

Gay priests: Given his hopeful statement about gay priests, "Who am I to judge?", which earned Francis a lot of praise, the unchallenged exclusion of homosexuals from priestly ordination has
been disappointing. A December 2016 document from the Congregation for Clergy, "The Gift of the Priestly Vocation," reaffirmed a 2005 instruction banning gay men from entering the priesthood. It leaves old assessments unquestioned and continues a false exaggeration of the role celibacy plays in the priesthood.

Women: The role of women is one of the most difficult and controversial matters within the Roman Catholic Church. Several times, Francis has emphasized that the church needs more women in all areas, especially in leadership positions. These comments were warmly received by many in the church, not just Catholic women's associations. Francis has appointed five instead of two women to the International Theological Commission.

But Francis has not yet sufficiently distanced himself from John Paul II's 1994 apostolic letter Ordinatio Sacerdotalis, which claims the ban on women to the priesthood is an unalterable ecclesiastical doctrine. Though prohibiting discussions about women's ordination imposed at that time had the opposite effect, John Paul and Benedict left a problem for their successors that is hard to overcome. When asked, Francis has declared the door to the priesthood to be closed to women. But he does after all use the image of a door — and, for this door, maybe a theological key can be found.

In the view of German Jesuit theologian Hans Waldenfels, Francis may have cracked open that door when in 2016 he recognized Mary Magdalene's role as the "true and authentic evangelizer." He also raised the July 22 memorial of Mary Magdalene to a feast on the church's liturgical calendar. Another theologian, Michael Seewald from Muenster, Germany, does not consider the previous arguments against the ordination of women to be valid and recommends a new debate on the priesthood for women.

Frank DeBarnardo comments on recent Supreme Court Case

Francis DeBarnardo writes that the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in the Masterpiece Cakeshop case is disappointing for two reasons, but reassuring for one.

First, by deciding in favor of a Colorado baker who refused to make a wedding cake for a gay couple, the court bolsters those in our country who want to use religious liberty as a tool for discrimination against LGBT people. They will think that they won the right to discriminate. They didn't. The court decided a procedural issue, not the civil rights issue at the heart of the case.

Second, by ruling on only a narrow element of the case—whether the state’s civil rights commission was prejudiced against religion—the court ignored the more important issues of whether LGBT
people are going to be considered second-class citizens in the U.S. Because they did not decide on the civil rights issue, justice is still being delayed.

The reassuring part of the decision is that the Court, in its majority opinion, seems intent on protecting the rights of LGBT people.

Cardinal Ouelett calls for synod on Latin women

La Osservatore Romano reports that Cardinal Marc Ouellet is calling for a synod on women.

“The Catholic Church, following the example of Jesus, must be very free from prejudices, from stereotypes and from the discrimination suffered by women. Christian communities must make a serious revision of life for a pastoral conversion which can ask forgiveness for all the situations in which they have been and still are today complicit in attacks on women’s dignity”. Starting with this reflection the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, chaired by Cardinal Marc Ouellet and held in the Vatican from 6 to 9 March elaborated a series of pastoral recommendations, proposing “seriously the question of a Synod of the universal Church on the subject of women”, following the Synods on the Family and on Young People.

At the heart of the declaration a theological view consisting of 14 points on the greatness of women’s dignity and vocations emerges, consistent with the Revelation, which Cardinal Ouellet himself described in depth in his interview with the sociologist María Lía Zervino. The texts presented in this issue retrace the difficulties, hopes and expectations of Latin American women in the Church today, with a range of voices that includes both laywomen and women religious who are active in ecclesiastical institutions.

Will Pope Francis Appoint More Cardinals Soon?

Robert Mickens reports on a rumor circulating that Pope Francis will appoint even more cardinals soon. He says it is not unprecedented.

Pope Francis appoints 14 new cardinals
To the German Bishops: Don’t publish yet

Cindy Wooden reports that Pope Francis has asked the Catholic bishops' conference of Germany not to publish nationwide guidelines for allowing Protestants married to Catholics to receive Communion at Mass, but to continue having diocesan bishops judge specific situations. Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office, confirmed the authenticity of a letter published June 4 on the Italian blog "Settimo Cielo."

"The Holy Father has reached the conclusion that the document has not matured enough to be published," said the letter signed by Cardinal-designate Luis Ladaria, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Read more

First lay rector at Pontifical Lateran University

Catholic News Agency reports that Pope Francis has appointed the first layperson to head Rome's Pontifical Lateran University.

The pope named Vincenzo Buonomo, 57, rector of the university, a Vatican press release announced June 2. As of July 1, he will succeed 67-year-old Bishop Enrico dal Covolo, a Salesian who was appointed rector in 2010.

Born April 17, 1961, in Gaeta, Buonomo specialized in international law and received his doctorate from the Lateran in 1983. He began teaching civil law at the university in 1984 and became a full professor in 2001.

He is the first layperson to be named rector of the Lateran University, whose former rectors include: Cardinal Angelo Scola (1995-2002), patriarch of Venice; and Archbishop Rino Fisichella (2002-2010), president of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization. The Congregation for Catholic Education named the first woman rector of pontifical university in Rome in 2014 when it appointed then-49-year-old Angeline Franciscan Sr. Mary Melone as rector of Rome's Pontifical Antonianum University. Read more

New Administrator appointed in Australia after Wilson found guilty of cover up

Joshua McElwee reports that Pope Francis has appointed an apostolic administrator to run the Australian archdiocese of Adelaide, following the玷污 of its former archbishop, Philip Wilson, who was found guilty of a cover-up in the case of Fr. Kieran Leahy. Read more
where Archbishop Philip Wilson has been found guilty of neglecting to report clergy sexual abuse as a priest in the 1970s.

In an unusual Sunday bulletin, the Vatican announced June 3 that Francis has named Bishop Gregory O'Kelly of the neighboring diocese of Port Pirie as administrator sede plena, marking a rare instance of a pontiff delegating one bishop to step in and take control of a diocese still technically belonging to another. Read more

**The Humanae Vitae debate**

In 2015 Peter Steinfels tried to crystalize the objective of Humanae Vitae. He wrote that some of his students at Georgetown were attracted to many parts of the document that focus on love, commitment, etc. In a hook-up culture, there is wisdom in the guidance.

But, the bishops have been unwilling to listen and integrate the experience of Catholics. All sorts of arguments have taken flight, many of them redundant.

Steinfels believes that Humanae vitae is seen less in terms of its specific contested argument than as part of a defensive barrier to protect vulnerable societies against intrusions by the powerful and destructive West.

Unfortunately, this kind of opposition is indiscriminate and too often allied with oppressive values (e.g., patriarchy) and myopic about who pays the price of the local status quo (e.g., women). It is also probably fated to go the way of Pius IX’s indiscriminate denunciation of “progress, liberalism, and modern civilization”—and with similar cost to the faith. Read more

**NFP: What's in a method?**

Lisa Fullam writes that the corrosiveness to marriage of an NFP-only approach was reported to Paul VI’s birth-control commission. Commission members Pat and Patty Crowley surveyed thousands of Catholics: most said that the rhythm method—an earlier, less effective version of today’s NFP—had harmed their marriages.

Then as now, there have been those who find NFP a joyous and fulfilling way to space their children. Most Catholics, however, ignore the church’s prohibition of artificial contraception as
irrelevant. As theologian Lisa Sowle Cahill said: “I am confident that most Catholic couples would be incredulous at the proposition that the use of artificial birth control necessarily makes their sexual intimacy selfish, dishonest, and unfaithful. Nor is their valuing of parenthood based on their experience of isolated sex acts as having a certain procreative structure.”

Read more of Part I

Women Changing the World and Church

María Luisa Aspe Armella writes that it is necessary to change the world because as it is, it is not God’s plan. And we women understand this well, both in the Church and outside her.

As women we are called – as we already were in other important periods of history – to play a significant role in today’s world.

The vocation of a woman is not fulfilled only in her family and social functions, but also and above all in her humanizing role. Her field of action is not so much civilization as rather culture. “Her soul” says St Macarius, “becomes the eye that captures and emits light. Here lies her prophetic mission, since her values expressed in life and in culture are counterposed to today’s civilization, to its disaffection, to its emptiness and its coldness. The woman is a living integration which can be set against the work of dehumanization in which this century is becoming engaged. Read more

Austrian Cardinal at odds with CDF?

Christa Pongratz-Lippitt and Christopher Lamb write that after CDF Prefect Luis Ladaria Ferrer SJ this week reaffirmed the impossibility of ordaining women in the Catholic Church, it has become clear that cardinal-elect Ladaria’s statements run counter to a position recently enunciated by Cardinal Christoph Schönborn.

In an article in L’Osservatore Romano on 30 May, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith stated that expressing doubt about the impossibility of ordaining women to the priesthood “creates serious confusion among the faithful”. His article was given the headline “The definitive character of the
The doctrine of Ordinatio sacerdotalis“, referring to Pope John Paul II’s 1994 apostolic letter that outlined the reasoning behind the ban on the priestly ordination of women.

The archbishop said he decided to write “in response to doubt” about Pope St John Paul II’s teaching. “It is a matter of serious concern to see the emergence in some countries of voices that question the definitiveness of this doctrine,” he wrote.

Read more
reflections with our Bishops to help create opportunities for greater understanding and inclusion in Church life.

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!

September 7 - 9, 2018
Cleveland, Ohio

Learn more or Sign up

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.

Sign the letter

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

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