Please support FutureChurch during our Women in Church Leadership Campaign!

Follow in the Footsteps of Our Foremothers in Faith in Greece!

Cincinnati's Voices Speaking hosts FutureChurch's Deborah Rose-Milavec

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

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

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

Read more
FutureChurch goes to New Ways Symposium

Russ Petrus, Program Director of FutureChurch headed to Chicago this past weekend to share information about FutureChurch resources and programs with participants at the News Ways Ministry National Symposium, Justice and Mercy Shall Kiss: LGBT Catholics in the Age of Pope Francis.”

Here is his report.

“We ain't what we oughta be. We ain't what we want to be. We ain't what we gonna be. But, thank God, we ain't what we was.” ~unknown, quoted by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Among the many impressivespeakers who presented was Rev. Bryan Massingale, who opened the Symposium with a plenary session entitled Pope Francis, Social Ethics, and LGBT People.

Massingale opened his presentation by articulating a question that has weighed heavily on the hearts and minds of LGBTQIA Catholics throughout Francis’ Papacy: what are we to make of the hope that Francis has given to Catholics with statements like “who am I to judge” and the concurrent hurt, disappointment and frustration caused by statements about LGBTQIA people coming from the Vatican, such the recent reiteration of the 2005 ban on gay priests, which claims that “Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women.”

Women and those who care about women’s equality in the Church are asking themselves the same question.

Read more
Future Church board member Rita Houlihan makes history as new art honoring St. Mary of Magdala is hung in the Church of the Ascension

Parishioners filled the Church of the Ascension on Manhattan's Upper West Side on April 22 to honor St. Mary of Magdala, the subject of the church's newest work of art: a bronze relief of Mary preaching.

Hundreds of parishioners from the parish's diverse congregation turned out for the festive 5:30 p.m. liturgy, which had a Gospel reading and homily by pastor Fr. Daniel Kearney that told the story of how Mary of Magdala was first to proclaim that Jesus had risen from the dead. The parishioners who heard this good news stayed after the Mass for the unveiling, blessing and dedication of a bronze relief of Mary of Magdala proclaiming the Resurrection.

Kearney said the parish chose to honor Mary of Magdala during Eastertide rather than wait until her declared feast day, July 22, because she had every reason to be celebrated during the joyous Easter season.

Read more

Phyllis Zagano asks, "Whose Gospel is it anyway?"

Who knows where the list came from, but the pope approved 12 men and one woman as consulters to the 2-year-old Vatican Secretariat for Communication.

This does not send a good message.

Read more

Female deacons in Spain: Why women could come to the rescue of Spain’s Catholic
In case you missed here, here is a insightful article from *El Pais* about the role women and women deacons could play in reviving the Church.

The author, Juan Bedoya, writes, "In the 19th century, the Catholic Church was deserted by the working classes; in the 20th century it lost its intellectuals and young people. In the 21st century, it is in danger of alienating women, who have been among its most active members."

“Young people left the Church without so much as slamming a door, and we haven’t taken note,” says the Bishop of Santander, Manuel Sánchez Monge, who sees that the Church’s women could soon follow suit."

Read more

**Women -- raising their voices, renewing the Church!**

In case you missed it, there is an exciting new website where you can hear and see Catholic women preaching each week. It is called Catholic Women Preach ([catholicwomenpreach.org](http://catholicwomenpreach.org)).

Launched in Advent 2016, Catholic Women Preach features a diverse group of Catholic women reflecting on the Scriptures that is rooted in their faith experience and their commitment to the Gospel.

Sr. Chris Schenk reflected on the birth of Jesus as a midwife. Sr. Barbara Reid likened Mary’s annunciation to the call of the prophets. Jocelyn Collen reflected on her work of ministering to women in prison. Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy spoke about the Gospel call to make sure all our sisters and brothers are fed and spoke as a mother of three who cares about the nourishment and brain development of all children. Kerry
Robinson reflects on the faith of her friend who died of breast cancer and Astrid Lobo Gajiwala preached about the triumph of young athletes "who fought like girls."

Sr. Mary Catherine Hilkert preaches about the woman in John's Gospel who is typically most known because she was caught in adultery and asks us to consider her role as a disciple who converted a whole Samaritan town on the strength of her testimony.

Sr. Margaret Farley preached about St. Mary Magdalene as the primary witness to the Resurrection.

Sr. Anita Baird holds up a beautiful image of a St. Sabina parish mural of the last supper with a faded image of Jesus and proclaims, "until everyone is welcome at the table, Jesus cannot come into the fullness of his glory."

Woven into each preaching session is the perspective of Catholic women. And for many Catholics, that is new.

Check out CatholicWomenPreach.org and be inspired!

**Jesus and the ordination of women**

Fr. Roger Vermalen Karban, Scripture scholar, writer, and Catholic priest in the diocese of Belleville, IL argues that the Catholic Church's traditional arguments against the priestly ordination of women revolving around Jesus of Nazareth being a man would be incomprehensible to early Christians.

According to this "official" line of reasoning, the priest must be "another Christ," a male other Christ. Such an individual must have a "natural resemblance" to the first Christ. By definition, a female can’t fill that role.

The authors of the Christian Scriptures
would never have understood that logic.

Read more

Policing the Communion Line

When a priest refuses to "police the communion line" and Catholics experience the welcoming Spirit of the kingdom of God, they know it.

Read more

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales launch "Mega Youth Poll"

Once again, the bishops of England and Wales are leading the Church when it comes to reaching out to youth in the lead up to the 2018 synod. The survey they have released closes on June 5, 2017.

Learn more

A 70-year old "baby boomer" reflects on FutureChurch teleconference where "Millennials Speak for Themselves"

Conni Dubick is a committed Catholic and a Dominican Associate of Peace. She serves as President of the Board of Directors of the North American Conference of Associates and Religious. She is 70 years old. But she believes she has a lot in common with three millennial Catholics who spoke about their faith life during a FutureChurch teleconference last year.

Read more
Cardinal Sarah reignites liturgy controversies

Cardinal Robert Sarah, the Holy See’s liturgy prefect and head of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, has lambasted the liturgical changes which occurred following Vatican II while praising Summorum Pontificum, which lifts restrictions on the Tridentine liturgy.

Cardinal Sarah said that those promoting a "modern liturgy" had caused disaster, devastation and schism by trying to reduce the Mass into a "simple convivial meal".

Although it has not been officially confirmed, it is believed that Francis has set up a commission to examine the 2001 text Liturgiam Authenticam that sets out principles on how to translate Latin into vernacular languages. It is reported that he has put Archbishop Arthur Roche, the number two person in the Congregation, in charge while the reported list of commission members does not include Cardinal Sarah (The Tablet, 8April17).

University of St. Thomas students protest Cardinal Dolan’s upcoming appearance

St. Thomas University students are protesting the choice of former archbishop of Milwaukee Timothy Dolan as spring commencement speaker, due to concerns relate to his role in handling sexual abuse allegations against Milwaukee priests and his reported remarks criticizing same-sex marriage.

Read more
Prayer: Lessons from the women

Russell Pollitt, SJ learns from the women in the Easter accounts.

He writes, "In the weeks after Easter we hear a number of accounts in which the risen Jesus encounters his somewhat perplexed and disheartened friends. These personal encounters are a key moment; it's from these encounters that they energetically go out and proclaim the Good News and the Christian community is born. In our lives we are invited to encounter God in prayer. St. Mark (16:1-11) tells us of an encounter between “a young man, dressed in a white robe” Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Salome. This encounter can teach us something about the perplexity and paradox of our own prayer."

Read more

Red-hot rubbish: BBC special separates the goats from the sheep in the art that portrays St. Mary Magdalene

Art critic Waldemar Januszczak thinks Dan Brown's depiction of Mary Magdalene is "red-hot rubbish." In his BBC special, he explores the various art forms that have shaped this saint in the Catholic imagination.

But, Lucy Lethbridge, writing for The Tablet, thinks the Januszczak program could have been better. Lethbridge argues that throughout the program, Januszczak gave his examination of the art short shrift (The Tablet, 8April17).

Learn more

India's Church remains in denial

Cynthia Stephen argues that the
Catholic Church is not doing enough to stop crime within their own ordained ranks.

In February, Father Robin Vadakancherry of Manathavady Diocese in Kerala was arrested for raping and impregnating a 16-year-old parishioner of his and a student of a school under his management.

The girl delivered a baby boy in a church-run hospital. The infant was moved to a church-run orphanage, all without informing the authorities of the fate of the girl, a minor under Indian law.

Police said the hospital's doctor and five nuns in the hospital and orphanage colluded to cover up the crime, a charge they now contest in court.

Read more (UCAnews subscription)

Listening to the needs of separated, divorced and remarried Catholics in France

The diocese of Le Havre last weekend organized a meeting for separated, divorced and remarried people in an effort to understand what they expect from the Church. A year after Pope Francis' "Amoris Laetitia" was published, integrating such people has become a concern for French dioceses.

Read more

Support our work

Don't miss these opportunities and events!

Join FutureChurch in
Greece and follow in the footsteps of our foremothers in faith

Listen to Sr. Chris and Russ Share a Preview of the Pilgrimage

From October 5 - 14, 2017 join FutureChurch as we explore the archaeological sites of early Christian women. Learn about the ancient Greek goddesses Athena, Artemis and Gaia to women of the New Testament and finally present day nuns in Greek monasteries. This pilgrimage will focus on the influence of women on the spirituality and history of Christianity. Sr. Christine Schenk will serve as educational director and Russ Petrus, FutureChurch program director will serve as spiritual director.

Read more

FutureChurch offers second retreat for Catholic women discerning a call to the diaconate

FutureChurch will host a second retreat for women who are discerning a call to the diaconate September 8-10 in San Francisco, CA. This second retreat will also include a special workshop on one component of diaconal ministry: the Ministry of the Word – particularly Liturgical Preaching. Sign up today!

Learn more

Catholic Women Preach

Each week throughout the year, Catholic Women Preach offers the wisdom and challenge presented by the Gospel through the experience of women. In this season of Easter, be inspired by the Catholic women who preach each Sunday and some holy days.
Celebrate the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene!

Go and Tell My Sisters and Brothers: A Celebration of Women Preachers

Join thousands of Catholics across the U.S. and worldwide as we celebrate the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene.

This year, FutureChurch will lift up women preachers from Scripture and history – from Mary of Nazareth and Mary of Magdala to Catherine of Siena and Thea Bowman. Together we will honor and learn from their witnesses and ask them to pray with us as we work to lift up women’s voices in Church and society today.

Support our work

Visit our website