Honor an inspiring woman in your life and support Catholic Women Preach!

Did you miss an issue of our weekly FOCUS E-News? Catch up!

Our roster is filling up! Do not miss your chance to register for the 2nd retreat for women discerning a call to the permanent diaconate!

Be inspired each week with Catholic Women Preaching!

SAVE THE DATE!
October 27, 2017
Sr. Sandra Schneider discusses the Gospel of John as a model for parish/community life today!

From the Executive Director

The Catholic Bishops' conference of England and Wales reports that over 16,500 young Catholics completed the online survey ahead of the 2018 Synod, Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment (The Tablet, 8 July 17).

Pope Francis made a strong pitch to young people saying, “A better world can be built also as a result of your efforts, your desire to change and your
The Church also wishes to listen to your voice, your sensitivities and your faith; even your doubts and your criticism. Make your voice heard, let it resonate in communities and let it be heard by your shepherds of souls."

The Bishops of England and Wales have sent their survey responses onto Rome. They are now asking local churches to find "meaningful and creative ways of listening to younger people."

In Bangor, Maine, Bishop Robert Deeley wants young Catholics to help him understand how the church can become more relevant. He is in listening mode.

In a world where some dim fear of hell or cultural pressures no longer motivates a generation to attend Mass, it is a hopeful sign to witness the outreach extended to younger Catholics and the grace of their reaching back to the church.

Some of our bishops understand the need to listen deeply. Some of our bishops understand that the concerns, hungers, and hopes of young Catholic adults must be respected as part of the dialogue for shaping the future of the church.

These Catholics are today's hope for the mission of the Gospel tomorrow. They are a reminder of why we all labor together to build a future for the church. Please continue to do your part and take action
today!

Open the discussion on married priests

DeaconChat: Start a Conversation on Women Deacons

Write a letter to our U.S. cardinals asking them to support Cardinal Anders Arborelius’ idea of a College of Women advisors to Pope Francis

Thank you for all you do!
Deborah Rose-Milavec
Executive Director

Sr. Pierrette Thiffault Officiates at Wedding in Canada

Cindy and David had their religious wedding on Saturday, July 22, celebrated by... a woman.

The exceptional ceremony took place in a Catholic church at Lorrainville, 650 km west of Montreal in Canada.

In the rural diocese of Rouyn-Norand in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region, the lack of priests is such that the bishop called on the assistance of Sr. Pierrette Thiffault of the Sisters of Providence.

Why Sr. Pierrette?

“You need to ask my bishop,” she smiles, explaining that in this zone several priests are responsible for up to seven or eight different parishes each. “I was happy and proud to be
CDF's new prefect will model cooperation

Massimo Faggioli believes Pope Francis's most important curial appointment thus far, Archbishop Luis Ladaria as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, will model a new, more collaborative approach in working with bishops and the rest of the Curia.

He describes Ladaria as an able academic theologian who studied under some of the best Jesuits in modern Catholic theology. He has expertise in Christology, theological anthropology, and patristics.

According to Faggioli, Ladaria is a moderate voice who knows traditionalists' circles well, not because he is close to them, but because he has sometimes been accused of heterodoxy by them.

James Bretzke SJ, a theologian who teaches at Boston College and lived with Ladaria in Rome for three years while teaching, describes him as a "careful, fair and good theologian, [one who is] not ideologically driven."

Faggioli believes Ladaria could reshape the CDF, shift the role of the International Theological Commission, bring a new way of dealing with complex issues, and model new cooperation in Rome and beyond.
The collapse of the monarchy

In his latest Letter from Rome, Robert Mickens intones a funeral rite. He announces the death of an institution.

Mickens writes that the last absolute monarchy in the West, the organization of the Roman Church, is collapsing. He argues that its "outdated model...no longer incarnates the reality of the lived experience of believers, the staggering majority of whom live in societies that are becoming more and more, and to varying degrees, participatory and representative democracies."

"A Church where the most important decisions are made almost exclusively by a celibate male clergy, and where bishops are held to little or no accountability, is unsustainable in a world where patriarchal and monarchical societies—begrudgingly, but steadily—are ceding rights and duties to those who are not part of the nobility, the clergy, or one specific gender."

Further, Mickens argues that Francis is expediting the collapse. His blueprint? *Evangelii Gaudium.*

And then, with pastoral flair, Mickens shows that in the midst of collapse, new life is rising up.

Ultimately the pope’s goal is to make the structures and
mentality of the Church more reflective of the Gospel and person of Jesus Christ, and to liberate it from a codified system of rules and philosophical ideas still deeply wedded to the culture of the ancient Greco-Roman world.

Investigative journalist Jason Berry urges Francis to create an independent judiciary at the Vatican to deal with bishops complicit in clergy sex abuse

Jason Berry writes that Cardinal George Pell’s return to Australia to face criminal charges has dealt a severe blow to Pope Francis’ reform agenda, making him the third consecutive Pope to find himself in a swamp over the long, aching crisis of clergy sex abuse.

Regardless of the allegations that he now faces, Pell’s record in Australia on sex abuse cases, particularly his approval of bare-knuckle legal counter-attacks on victims, should have disqualified him from a Vatican post.

Berry also believes that Cardinal Gerhard Müller should have been let go sooner because of his complicity in sending an abusive priest to a new parish where he was subsequently charged with 22 cases of abuse.

Berry contends that the institution has not a structure for cleaning itself up and is failing "abominably." Under canon law, the Pope is a one-
According to Berry, the lesson from thousands of lawsuits, prosecutions, and scandals since the 1980s is the failure of canon law in the realm of criminal statutes.

Berry believes Francis is at a crossroads and that he should create an independent judiciary at the Vatican to deal with bishops who are irresponsible and obstructionists. Read more (subscription link)

**Ordinary Catholics must help with reform**

Kevin Liston writes that there are many reform movements active in the Catholic Church. Most seem to focus on changing the structures and systems of the church, on reshaping doctrinal positions and updating teachings. Organisational reform is necessary and long overdue but there is also need for a complementary movement among ordinary Catholics.

In recent decades, the sense of ownership that people have over their own lives has undergone a significant shift. Personal authenticity and autonomy are the order of the day. More people feel they each have unique ways of being themselves and seek forms of expression that frequently do not fit traditional moulds. Read more

**Clergy sex abuse: Francis is still failing**
Keiran Tapsel, a member of the canon law panel before the Australian Royal Commission investigating clergy sex abuse, writes that the all-male clerical culture is a critical factor in the sex abuse scandal, but it fails to point to the failure of Pope Francis to change parts of canon law that embody that culture.

Pope Francis may feel restrained by theology from having women priests. But Canons 478 and 1420 require vicars general, episcopal and judicial vicars also to be priests. They therefore can't be women except with a dispensation given by the men in Rome. This can be changed with the stroke of a pen.

A more serious example of clericalism is canon law's imposition of the pontifical secret on all allegations and information about child sexual abuse by clerics. The only exception that would allow reporting to the civil authorities was given to the United States in 2002 and to the rest of the world in 2010, and it was limited to where there are applicable civil reporting laws. Very few jurisdictions have comprehensive reporting laws. In the United States, only half the states have clergy as mandatory reporters.

Pope Francis' attempts to hold bishops accountable have meant very little because his capacity to do so is limited by the Code of Canon Law. The three bishops he forced to resign — Archbishop John Nienstedt and his auxiliary, Bishop Lee
Piché, of St. Paul-Minneapolis, and Bishop Robert Finn of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri — had breached canon law in force in the United States since 2002 that required them to comply with civil reporting laws. Bishops who live in jurisdictions without reporting laws comply with canon law by not reporting.

Since 1996, the Irish, British, Australian, and United States bishops have wanted mandatory reporting under canon law irrespective of reporting requirements under civil law. The Holy See has consistently rejected the requests.

Read more

The Other Catholics: Remaking America's Largest Religion

Julie Byrne, Chair of Catholic Studies at Hofstra University, writes about the diversity of Catholic communities beyond the rank and file parish in her book The Other Catholics: Remaking America's Largest Religion published by Columbia University Press.

Timothy Kelly, Chair of History at St. Vincent College, summarizes her work in his review for NCR.

He writes that thousands of practicing Catholics in the United States do not affiliate with Rome or the Orthodox churches. Instead, they participate in versions of Catholicism that offer clear alternatives to what they understand to be Roman Catholicism's too-liberal or too-conservative practices. Do these
independent Catholic churches constitute viable options for those Catholics who seem increasingly disenchanted with the institutional church?

Julie Byrne estimates that these "independent Catholics" may number about a million, or, she notes in other places, perhaps half that. Some of these belong to versions of Catholicism that are far more conservative than the Roman church, but others belong to the much more liberal bodies upon which Byrne focuses *The Other Catholics*. Read more

**Bishop Paprocki spreads the harm**

Marianna Duddy Burke, executive director of DignityUSA writes that while there will always be differences in how Church leaders interpret and implement Church dogma, the punitive and exclusive tactics promoted by the Bishop Paprockis of the world betray the very soul of the Catholic faith.

They go far beyond the terrible damage inflicted by the promulgation of doctrines that limit human possibilities, especially in the realm of gender and relationships.

They reflect a view of humanity as fundamentally wicked and needing to be controlled by the select few who are powerful and good.

They repudiate essential tenets of our tradition and of Scriptures.
from Genesis through the Gospels. According to Genesis 1: 31, humans were created in the Divine image. We are beloved enough that God intervenes repeatedly throughout history to restore our freedom, or to set us back on a path of righteousness. In the ultimate act of salvific love, God’s own Begotten One was sent to redeem humanity, through ministry, suffering, death, and resurrection.

Read more

Cardinal Pell denies charges

CNN reports that one of the most senior figures in the Vatican will plead not guilty to multiple charges of historical sexual assault offenses, his lawyer told an Australian court on Wednesday.

Cardinal George Pell faced the Melbourne Magistrates Court Wednesday for his first hearing since the charges were made by Victoria Police last month. The 76-year-old, who has consistently and strenuously denied the charges, has been given a leave of absence from his role at the Holy See as prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy while he fights the case in the city where he was once Archbishop.

Read more

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Learn what you can do to save your parish community

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2017 CALL TO ACTION
EAST COAST CONFERENCE
CTA Chapters from Maine to Florida

Justice and Mercy Under the Trump Administration
“...to do justice, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with God.” (Micah 6:8)

Friday and Saturday, October 20 – 21, 2017

Double Tree by Hilton, Baltimore BWI Airport
890 Elkridge Landing Rd., Linthicum, MD 21090

Keynote Speakers

Sr. Simone Campbell: “Justice and Mercy Under a Trump Administration”
Dr. Greer Gordon: “Racism in the Church and Society”
Sr. Patty Chappell: “Pax Christi: Being a People of Peace”

Focus Presentations

LGBT and the Welcoming Church
Caring for the Earth, Our Common Home

Immigration, Sanctuary, and Human Rights for All
Transgender and Intersex Identities and the Family
Jews and Muslims...Our Sisters and Brothers

Registration Materials Coming Soon

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