

## The Priest Shortage Originated in the Mid-Sixteenth Century

According to Dr. Thomas O' Loughlin, Professor of Historical Theology at the University of Nottingham, the priest shortage is even more acute than is typically reported because the Church tends to take an anemic view of what it means to be a Eucharistic people.

O' Loughlin contends that there has been a serious crisis of "under-ordination" since the mid-sixteenth century when as a result of the Reformation debates the full-time, professionalized, seminary-educated cleric became the norm. Since that time, he asserts that the Church has never attempted to establish an optimal ratio for priests to people. He proposes a new vision of parish life with a ratio of 1 priest per 100 Catholics.

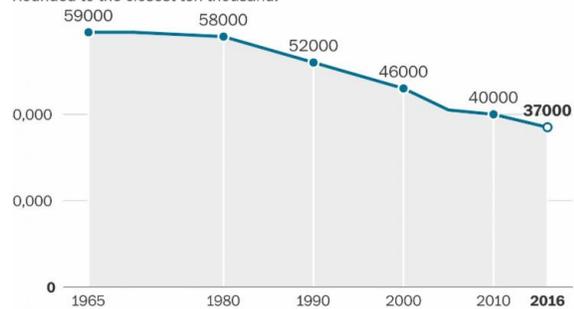
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## Cologne priests criticize parish clustering, mandatory celibacy, and call for women's ordination

In an open letter published on January 10, 2017, 11 priests from the Archdiocese of Cologne criticized the practice of clustering parishes,

**The number of Catholic priests in the U.S.**

Rounded to the closest ten thousand.



Source: CARA, Georgetown University

SARAH PULLIAM BAILEY / THE WASHINGTON POST



mandatory celibacy, and called for the Church to admit women to the priesthood. "It makes no sense to pray to the Holy Spirit for vocations, if, at the same time, women are excluded from the priesthood. We urgently need to forge ahead with courageous initiatives regarding admission to the priesthood," the priests wrote. One of the writers, Mgr. Wolfgang Bretschneider remarked, "There was a time when one could not even discuss women's ordination openly," but he believes a lot has changed under Pope Francis (Tablet, 21Jan17).

[Read more](#)

## German Bishops offer "broad interpretation of *Amoris Laetitia*"

On February 1, the German bishops published their guidelines for *Amoris Laetitia* which allows Catholics who are divorced and remarried to receive the sacraments. Their guidelines are predicated on the importance of respecting individual decisions of conscience. They have been criticized by the likes of Cardinal Gerhard Mueller, Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, who stressed that it was not "correct" for bishops to interpret *Amoris Laetitia*. But Archbishop Heiner Koch, who is responsible for family life in the bishops' conference, defends their broad interpretation saying they are firmly convinced "this is the Pope's intention" (Tablet, 11Feb17).

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## First woman appointed to head of Vatican Museum

Barbara Jatta, an Italian art historian, has been appointed to head the Vatican Museums. She is the first woman to be appointed to such a



position and the appointment makes her the most prominent female administrator in the Vatican thus far.

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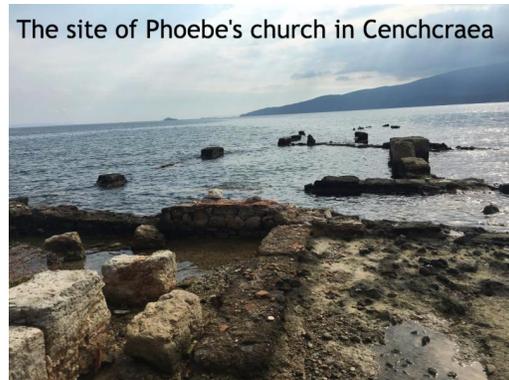
## Don't miss these opportunities and events!

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

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. Register by April 30 and receive a discount.

[Read more](#)

The site of Phoebe's church in Cenchraea



### 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

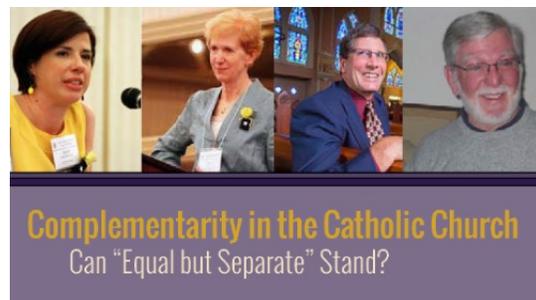
Each week throughout the year, Catholic Women Preach offers the wisdom and challenge presented by the Gospel through the experience of women. In this season of Lent, Holy Week and the Easter, be inspired by the Catholic women who preach each Sunday and some holy and feast days.



[Learn more](#)

## Complementarity Series

Join us on April 5, 2017 for part three of our teleconference series on Complementarity. Todd Salzman and Michael Lawler of Creighton University will discuss complementarity in papal thought in the last few decades and how Pope Francis has engaged the concept. You can also listen to the podcasts of Natalia Imperatori-Lee and Susan Ross on the topic.



[Sign up for Part Three](#)

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