

# Call to Action Michigan

## 20th Anniversary

### 1996 - 2016



CALL TO ACTION  
Inspire Catholics, Transform Church

Call to Action Michigan  
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#### Mission Statement

*CTA of Michigan educates, inspires and activates Catholics to work for justice and build inclusive communities of faith through a lens of anti-oppression principles including anti-racism.*

## A REWARDING SUMMER

*By Marianne Bernard*

Call to Action Michigan is an organization that actively works for justice in our Church and in our world. The summer of 2015 was a busy one for CTA-MI members and friends.

This Memorial weekend marked the 19<sup>th</sup> year that Detroit area members held a demonstration at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral on the occasion of the Ordination of five new priests. As we do every year, letters were sent to the men congratulating them on their big day. We wanted them to know that the demonstration was to bring attention to the unjust practice of excluding women who are called to the priesthood from being ordained.

In June we entered into a conversation with the producers of the film, *Radical Grace*. CTA-MI is hoping to hold events showing the film at several venues throughout Michigan. *Radical Grace* follows Sr. Simone Campbell, the late Sr. Jean Hughes and Sr. Christine Schenk as they work to Justice in our church and our world. Both the filmmaker, Rebecca Parish, and one of the sisters featured in the film, Christine Schenk, have expressed interest in coming to some of our showings to discuss the film and do some Q and A. For more information on the film and to watch a clip of the film go to <https://m.youtube/?#/watchv=cFyLKLPvVYk>

Just following the Fourth of July holiday Jeannie and Mike Daly and I met with a band of human rights activists walking from Detroit to Flint to draw attention to the plight of those suffering from the effects of unsafe water and water shutoffs. The organizer of this event, Kim Redigan, described with firsthand knowledge, the inhumane conditions people are suffering.

*- Continued on page 2*

## A Follow Up Game Changing Encyclical

*By Jennifer Marie Marcus, Esq., Priest, ARCWP*

Undoubtedly, Francis's encyclical "*Laudato Si* [Praised Be]: On the Care of Our Common Home" is historic and will have an impact on the global community and its economy. The emphasis on how climate change has a direct negative impact on the global poor is laudatory and apparent.

Since the global poor are primarily women and children, if Francis is really serious about making significant inroads into eradicating poverty it would behoove him to issue a follow up historic encyclical elevating the status and the role of women commencing with taking action in his own Church.

He could start by placing women in leadership roles and recognizing their Divine call to Holy Orders and the Episcopate. This would be sign to the rest of the world that women are scripturally equal to men in source divinity and it would be consistent with the Vatican II Documents.

The encyclical should state in clear unequivocal terms that because women are equal children in the eyes of our Creator they can no longer be morally, culturally, and legally viewed as subservient to men, nor are they property, or second class citizens.

*-Continued on page 2*

## A Rewarding Summer

*Continued from page 1*

According to Redigan, “no one expects water should be available to them for free but the cost of water at the present rates are out of reach for the poor, even the working poor”. Although we did not walk with them we provided hospitality when they arrived in Clarkston and I was happy to serve as vehicle escort to the walkers from Clarkston to Grand Blanc. The two days I spent with them were mostly rainy yet it did not dampen our spirits. They were very grateful for the cash CTA-MI donated to them for food and drink along the way. CTA-MI members have made a commitment to continue to be active members in this fight. (*see related article*) *Water is a Human Right!* *By Jeanine Daly*

For the past thirteen years CTA-MI has been involved in Mary Magdalene Celebrations. This year it was led by Jeannie Daly, and held at St. John Fisher University Chapel on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Jeannie led all in honoring Mary Magdalene, apostle to the apostles and closest friend of Jesus. The message was that, women as well as men, were recognized as equals by Jesus and that early communities depended many times on the resources these women provided for ministry. We were reminded that some men of the church were (and continue to be) afraid to recognize women of strength and power, so they opted to mythologize them as prostitutes and temptresses (Eve).

It was a very special day for Jeannie as she was honored with the 2015 “In the Spirit Award” It was presented by Kathy O’Bee of our Grand Rapids branch. I can’t think of anyone more deserving than Jeannie. She serves on our board currently as Immediate Past President and I can personally attest to her unwavering commitment to Call to Action’s mission of educating, inspiring and motivating all to work for a more just world. I know you will join me in congratulating Jeannie.

Another long standing event is our CTA-Michigan’s Annual Picnic every August at the home of Mary Hennig. This year on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Along with the all-inclusive Liturgy, we also had a very moving anointing service focused on health and healing.



Beth Rindler (Detroit), Marie Kopin (Saginaw) and I joined a group of 200 Catholic feminists at the WOW (Women’s Ordination Conference) at an international gathering September 18-20 in Philadelphia. The conference title reflects the organizations, WOC and WOW, who have been working tirelessly for justice for women. Their mission goes far beyond merely ordination to include full participation for women in the Church we love. What is remarkable is that the momentum of this truly international community has grown stronger over the last forty years.

On a personal note, I came home after the WOW Conference only to return to Philadelphia the following weekend. My twin sister, Trish, and I went by bus from St Edward’s in Port Huron to Philadelphia for the Holy Father’s visit. We were three buses filled with men, women and children on a pilgrimage to experience the phenomenon which is Pope Francis. It was a very diverse crowd and I very much enjoyed sharing the excitement with like-minded members of the, “body of Christ.” I am still processing what I shared and gained from these trips. I plan to share my reflections on September’s rewarding experiences in the future so stay tuned.

The future is filled with promise and hope. At this time of year, we look forward with anticipation, to what the next year will bring. I thank God that we have this organization where we work together for a more just and peaceful world. Pope Francis reminds us that we need to pray for the future of our church and for each other. It is a practice that I intend to embrace. May God bless you.

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## Game Changing Encyclical ... *Continued from page 1*

Women are to be treated with dignity and respect, have wage parity with men for the same work they perform and are to be free of practices and laws that are misogynistic, patriarchal, bigoted, discriminatory oppressive and result in all forms of emotional and physical violence. Behavior, actions or laws falling short of those prohibitions would be viewed as grave sins. It is my belief that such an encyclical would challenge backward cultures, secular and religious institutions and governments to improve the lives of women and reduce the number of poverty stricken people in the world.

At the minimum it would invite serious global discourse of the scourge of gender inequality and its connection to poverty, misogyny, patriarchal oppression, discrimination and violence, and overtime be a segue for positive social change and justice.



## Hello from Grand Rapids!

A small group of us have been meeting on a regular basis for a brief couple of years. We regularly meet in Ada to pray, discuss personal and Church related issues and just about any other topic which may come up. We number about 40+ on the mailing list with about 10 - 15 persons who regularly attend. Our fearless leader, and branch gatherer, is Kathy O’Bee. Christine and Bob Funaro work with Kathy to help with some of the organizational details.

Recently, we have been discussing the encyclical Laudato Si! We decided that it would be an important part of our lives to pursue this critical document. Our conversations have been direct, honest, and leading to some forms of actions. We are looking to expand consciousness about the effects of recycling and how this small part of life can help in some way with the issues of concern for the earth. We are looking to adapt a new vocabulary to help to sensitize those who we meet with Earth Language. More will come and evolve. There is a great deal to learn and we are dedicated to beginning this process with a view towards expanding our learning to the community.

We are also looking to understand and learn much more about the issue of Human Trafficking. This is huge, but we hope to do a small part to understand and then to make a small impact in this critical issue.

Our group is small but dedicated to learning, sharing, and implementing some actions on these key issues and others which might be raised.

We put together a basket from CTA-GR and CTA-MI as well as had three great art pieces as a part of the National Conference. We were able to assist by raising \$331 for National. We are also looking to get the sign-in for the MP-3 access for the keynote and other speakers.

More to follow - regards from all of us in CTA-Grand Rapids.

*Kathy, Christine and Bob*



## From the President ...

*By Marianne Bernard*

I have not been involved in CTA as long as most of you reading this. I only came on the scene ten years ago. I felt so very welcome from day one. I didn’t dream then that in a few short years I would be on the board. Being a board member is being a member of a team of people who work tirelessly to ensure that CTA-MI stays on track with our commitment to make this a more just world. Being a member of the board means you are in the company of warm, funny and hardworking folks. We discuss projects as they come to our attention by our members as well as follow the news media. Justice issues keep us all very busy.

One of the features of our board is that we make decisions based on the principles of consensus. We take the time needed in our discussions and while making plans for everyone’s positions to be heard. We have a common heart and you can be sure we are on the same page as all of you. From time to time it does the organization good to add some new members to our board. We know that some of you may have considered joining the board and I say that you should. There are several positions open on the executive board, secretary and president, as well as members at large. You can go online to [www.claim.org](http://www.claim.org) and click on bylaws for a description of board positions. You can also contact anyone on the current board with questions or concerns – as I said we are a welcoming group.

We have been in touch with Roy Bourgeois and he has agreed to be our keynote speaker at our state conference in the fall of 2016. Roy will share his ideas on church reform and fill us in on the new location for the SOA Watch event for 2016. We will also have a panel discussion with local activist who have suggestions of actions we all can take. Soon you will be receiving the date and more details. It would be great if we could get some of you out there to join our conference committee. We are sure you have much to share.

For more information how you can help email me at [mailingsfromctami@gmail.com](mailto:mailingsfromctami@gmail.com) or call me at (248) 625-1723.



*Demonstration at Ordination to Priesthood at Detroit’s Most Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, 2013.*

## BOOK REVIEW – By Marianne Bernard and others

I would like to make you aware of a recent book that comes highly recommend: Catholic Women Speak: Bringing Our Gifts to the Table, September 29, 2015, paperback, authored and edited by Catholic Women Speak Network.

### **About the Author**

The Catholic Women Speak Network (CWSN) is an online forum for theological dialogue and collaboration around issues relating to Catholic women's roles, responsibilities and relationships in the Church and society. It is administered by the Digby Stuart Research Center for Religion, Society and Human Flourishing at the University of Roehampton in London. The Catholic Women Speak Network (CWSN) is a forum for theological dialogue and collaboration around issues relating to Catholic women's roles, responsibilities and relationships in the Church and society.

### **Reviews**

-- An expansive and compelling collection....In 40 short essays mixing the sociological, theological, and sometimes deeply personal, the writers raise a number of weighty concerns....[Catholic Women Speak] brings together women from a range of professional fields and places around the world to express their views on the numerous and complex problems being faced by families. --National Catholic Reporter

-- One of the strengths of the volume is the plurality of voices, which do not speak with a single, unified opinion on controversy. Recurring themes do abound, such as the particular problems of poverty and motherhood, or the need for mercy in the aftermath of divorce, but there are some tensions between voices in the book. This is all the better, really, to reflect the complexity of women's lives ... I can easily see this book being valuable for pastors and pastoral associates, for parish book clubs, for academics to use in their classrooms when dealing with perennially hot-button topics. --DT - Daily Theology

-- This is an up-to-date collection of Catholic women's views on religion and Church. The essays reflect a variety of opinions, hopes and dreams, but all are well worth reading and pondering. The volume would make a fine gift for any woman who claims her Catholic heritage and has studied and prayed about the 21st Century Church, especially under Pope Francis' leadership. By Barbara Moran

-- In Catholic Women Speak faithful Catholic Women break open their hearts to share extremely personal and well informed essays on issues that Catholic feminists face. Many of these offerings are heartbreaking yet it is clear none of these women have lost heart in the church they love. Actually some of these women have converted to Catholicism as adults. The book deals with the tough issues of our day such as defining family, concerns about accepting LGBT Catholics as well as the acceptance of women in ministry. Human sexuality is very thoughtfully considered in several of these essays. It may seem odd to say but I found this book to be a real page turner. Really, I was enthralled by the level of commitment that each of these women are to making the Catholic Church a place for equality and justice. You will want to share this book with all the women and men in your life. By Marianne Bernard

## From the National Conference ...



Photos from Bob Funaro

## Celebrating 20 Years Call To Action Michigan 1996 - 2016





## In the Spirit

By Jeannine Daly

This year's Mary Magdalene Celebration included a mass at St. John Fisher Community University Parish which is affiliated with Oakland University. Fr. Jerry Brzezinski, recently retired pastor said the Mass on July 16, in the evening. Jeannine Daly shared a reflection on Mary Magdalene written by Sr. Mary Van Gilder, IHM, a number of years ago, for a similar celebration.

Sr. Mary's reflection discussed Mary Magdalene's close relationship with Jesus, being the very first to visit the tomb and announce the resurrection to the other apostles. Mary has been portrayed as a temptress (woman of seven demons) because of her deep faith and close connection to Jesus. Sr. Mary suggested that demonizing women has often been the stance of an all-male clergy not comfortable with capable women.

The reception following the mass included the presentation of the Call to Action "In the Spirit" award to Jeannine Daly, Immediate Past President of CTA of Michigan. The award was presented by Kathy O'Bee whose deceased husband, Jerry O'Bee, was an earlier pastor of St. John Fisher and himself once the recipient of this award.

The award recognizes Ms. Daly "For willingness to step up and lead our state organization; For your unwavering dedication for renewal in the Church; For your willingness to speak Truth to power while encouraging dialogue; For your openness to accepting all and creating a sense of Welcome in the CTA-



MI organization; For your ability to reflect the person of Jesus to every person you meet; For your infectious sense of joy in everything you do; with heartfelt gratitude."

Sr. Mary Van Gilder was also once chosen for the "In the Spirit Award" giving SJFC the distinction of being home to three "In the Spirit" recipients. The Spirit, indeed, is alive and well!

Sr. Mary's writings have recently been compiled and published, as she had requested. The book is entitled "In the Kingdom" and also includes some of her original art work.



By Jeannine Daly

Early last summer Pax Christi invited Kim Redigan of the People's Water Board to talk with members about the water shut-offs plaguing the poor and marginalized in the City of Detroit. Kim's presentation prompted me to write to Archbishop Alan Vigneron to ask why the Catholic church is not preaching about the injustice of the water shut-offs, particularly in light of Pope Francis' urgent message about our responsibility to speak out for those with no voice.

Archbishop Vigneron responded to the letter and explained that he had alerted Bishop Donald Hanchon regarding the water shut-offs and that he should be contacted. A group including Lila Cabala and Kim Redigan from the People's Water Board, Sr. Elizabeth Walters, IHM; Sr. Mary Ellen Howard, and Mike and Jeannie Daly met with Bishop Hanchon in late September. He expressed sincere concern and we were all enthusiastic about his response to have the church take a stand. He contacted Paul Long who sets up the agenda for the quarterly meeting of the Michigan Council of Catholic Bishops. We hoped that would result in an opportunity for the group to address the bishops, but that failed.

Now there are a number of bills proposed which will place the issue of water before the legislature. The People's Water Board strongly supports an effort for a water affordability plan which was drafted in 2005, but has not been implemented partly because of Detroit's bankruptcy and subsequent Emergency Manager. Other cities with Emergency Managers appointed by the governor experiencing water problems include Highland Park and Flint.

Paul Long recently contacted Jeannie Daly regarding water at the request of Bishop Hanchon. Mr. Long now has the information about legislative efforts focused on water. His staff will explore the House Bills and he will be in contact with us. We hope the Michigan Council of Catholic Bishops (MCCB) will support efforts to ensure clean, affordable water is available to all. We firmly believe water is a human right.

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## Call to Action Membership – both Michigan and National!

By your membership you are standing with Call to Action's mission for justice and equality. CTA-MI members will receive three newsletters yearly and a discount on our yearly state conference.

With a combined membership you will also receive CTA-USA award winning publications and a discount to the national conference. (The Michigan Chapter of Call To Action is a separately incorporated local organization.)

- \$25 CTA-MI Individual chapter membership  This is a renewal  
 \$35 CTA-USA individual national membership  I am currently a paid member of CTA-USA  
 \$50 CTA-MI & CTA-USA Combined membership (New Option = \$10 savings)  
Your contact information will be sent to CTA-USA for combined individual membership.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ My donation to CTA-MI for all the good work CTA does.

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