

# Call to Action of Michigan Newsletter – Summer 2011



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## Editor's Essay

John Kinkel ([john.kinkel@gmail.com](mailto:john.kinkel@gmail.com))

As I drive to Detroit and the ACC meetings (American Catholic Council), the words of Hans Küng ring in my ears: the church is in crisis! Matthew Fox's book (*The Pope's War*, 2011) states the problem this way: the church is in schism. A group has broken off from the vine—Christ. But what is the name of this sect? You be the judge.

In another part of town the archbishop has rolled out his old “defrocking machine.” Woe to any priest who says Mass on Sunday for this bunch of liberals. You'll be laicized! Later on the Detroit Archbishop turned to more pressing matters: asking Catholics to help him pay off a stack of bills on his desk. He needs \$132 million.

As you read on in this newsletter, you'll find a beautiful letter that a daughter wrote to her dad. It is a sad story of her “marriage preparation” experience at the hands of a Catholic priest. One high ranking church official called it very “sad.” So what can we do to reform the church? We know some people have broken away. They do not know the heart of Christianity. They have to find their way back to our home.

- I find my way back to my Catholic roots by reading how three women exchanged over ten emails to try and understand why women are treated so badly by the church.
- I know I am on the right track when I see how Arnie Messing takes time to show us a new way of looking at death and burial. Makes a lot of sense.

– Continued on page 4



## Detroit Ordination Demonstration

Fifteen local Call to Action of Michigan members and an ACC guest from Colorado gathered for the 2011 Ordination Demonstration early June 11 at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament. One of our members carried a picture of our beloved Sr. Gerry Sellmen who often joined us before her death. Her presence was with us as we picketed for a priesthood open to all who desire to serve in that capacity. For the first time since demonstrations began, Fr. Stephen Pullis, one of the newly ordained, wrote to CTA of Michigan in response to our letter sent to congratulate the ordinandi.

Our letter explains that the reason for our demonstration outside the cathedral prior to the Ordination Mass is our firm belief that the priesthood should not only be open to those males who choose celibacy, but to married priests and, of course, to women. Fr. Pullis regrets our lack of understanding of Catholic theology regarding the priesthood and holds us in prayer. He expressed sentiments similar to those of Archbishop Vigneron. Each of these men could learn a great deal from Anthony Padovano's presentation “Reclaiming the Spirit and Vision of the People of God” which was delivered at Cobo Hall while we were demonstrating at the Cathedral. Thanks to video we were still able to hear and see him. -- Jeannine Daly

## The Mission of Call to Action of Michigan

Call to Action 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.

## CTA Washtenaw News

Randy Vonck  
([rvonck@comcast.net](mailto:rvonck@comcast.net))

At the May 29 Washtenaw CTA liturgy/potluck, Rosemary Rader's daughter, MarisaHuston, gave us an excellent presentation on immigration issues here in Washtenaw County.

Marisa works for the Washtenaw County Worker Center: <http://workercenter.org/>

Contact Randy Vonck for Word document of Marisa's talk with information on raids and deportation, immigration myths and resources.

A special thanks to Marisa, Rosemary and Judi Pawloski for putting together the great liturgy.

Marisa punctured some of the myths surrounding immigration in the U.S.

- Send all undocumented immigrants home. There are roughly 11 million undocumented immigrants in the USA. It would cost about \$206 billion to deport all of them over a five year period.
- These immigrants are illegal and not real Americans. About 3 million of the so-called undocumented immigrants were born here and are U.S. citizens.
- These immigrants utilize services that were meant for our citizens. Undocumented immigrants provide valuable services and pay about \$100 billion in federal, state, and local taxes. Some pay into social security but never collect benefits.

## President's Perspective

By Jeannine Daly

Much is happening in the Catholic Church in Michigan, particularly in the Archdiocese of Detroit where we hosted the American Catholic Council Pentecost week-end.

The event stirred controversy with our Archbishop, Alan Vigneron, who threatened church employees with reprisals as severe as "defrocking" for participating in the closing liturgy.

Isn't it ironic that Detroit IS the city where Cardinal John Dearden invited Catholics to gather for the very first "Call to Action" gathering?

Despite a major power grid problem in the downtown area, the ACC attracted nearly 2000 dedicated, Vatican II Catholics. The day the ACC opened, there were pre-meetings including a gathering of Elephants in the Living Room who heard author Matthew Perry talk about church finances and a number of FutureChurch members who listened to Sr. Chris Schenk talk about Early Women in the Church and Mary of Magdala celebrations. Council attendees heard from Dr. Jeanette Rodriguez who spoke of US Latin theology and the theology of liberation. We watched an interview with Hans Küng, via video following the opening ceremony Friday night. Saturday's speakers included Dr. Anthony Padovano, Mr. James Carroll's address "Why am I a Catholic?: Reclaiming the Commitment of the People of God," and Matthew Fox's impassioned "Reclaiming the Joy of the People of God."

Sunday morning Sr. Joan Chittister brought the crowd to its feet repeatedly with her rousing speech entitled "Reclaiming the Hope of the People of God." Her natural storytelling ability drew the crowd through a number of "good event, bad event" scenarios with a challenge to reclaim the hope. At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, would anyone have dreamed that women would win the right to vote, that desegregation would happen in our country, that the Berlin Wall would come down, or that apartheid would end in South Africa? These seemingly impossible feats are part of history; change in the church is slow, but possible.

-- Jeannine Daly



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## CTA Lansing Branch News

In May the Lansing CTA group gathered in the home of one of our members to view and discuss the National Geographic video; "Celebrate What's Right With the World" by famed photographer Dewitt Jones.

Discussion followed the 20 minute video which helps each of us to step back, take a look at the good/positive things of our world and celebrate them even in the midst of times that often seem chaotic and negative.

This spring Lansing CTA sponsored two silent demonstrations at our local Cathedral in support of ordination of all whom God calls to priesthood.

The first event was held on Holy Thursday morning as people entered St. Mary Cathedral for the Mass of the Chrism. Five members held a silent protest which was in support of Fr. Roy Bourgeois, MM (our 2010 state conference keynoter) who is being threatened with dismissal from his Maryknoll Order because of his support for the ordination of women.

The second silent protest in support of ordination for all called by God to Holy Orders was held on Saturday, June 11 as people entered the Cathedral for the ordination of men to the priesthood. Eight members of the Lansing CTA Branch stood outside the cathedral with various signs calling for change in our church's current policies about ordination.

Our Lansing Branch again has the privilege of hosting our CTA-Michigan fall conference here in Lansing and we look forward to seeing many of you here in the capitol city on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

We will resume our usual third Thursday of the month meetings in the fall and invite any in the Lansing area who would like to join us to contact either of our Lansing leaders whose contact information can be found on the front of this newsletter. All Are Welcome.

-- Janet Glisson and Karen Schrauben ([kroses@comcast.net](mailto:kroses@comcast.net))

## Women's Ordination, Church Politics, and Sexism in the Catholic Church

The discussion below originated in a series of emails generated among Maria Grimminger, Beth Rindler, and Mary Cay Sengstock, from the Macomb branch of CTA. It began with a proposal that members of CTA (or one or more of the branches) study the manner in which the Catholic church hierarchy uses church politics, and particularly, the notion of papal infallibility, in its approach to the role of women in the church. It then evolved into a suggestion that the issue be raised as a topic in the newsletter.

Certainly a major component of this discussion should be a reminder of Fr. Roy Bourgeois' perspective, as presented to us at our September 2010 State Conference. Since his presentation to us, further developments have included his refusal to recant his position on the ordination of women, and what appears to be a stalemate on his dismissal from the Maryknoll Order. Fr. Roy has not been reticent to make known his conviction that women are not barred by scripture from ordination. Bishop Robert Morris of Australia is another cleric who has also raised this issue. While some other clerics have privately indicated that they share these views, there is no great movement among the clergy to join in publicizing their views. Perhaps greater discussion among lay Catholics might encourage more clergy to take a more public stand. It might also suggest other approaches which all Catholics could employ in addressing sexism in the church.

There seems to be little questioning that Pope Benedict, as well as his predecessor, have employed various mechanisms of church politics in order to ensure that the subservient position of women to clerical men is maintained in the Church – even to the point of making it a defined doctrine.

Catholics need to see more clearly the political antics the Pope and the clerics who agree with him are attempting to use to keep women in a subordinate position in relation to male clerics in our church. Presently, there is a feeble attempt by church officials to use the doctrine of infallibility as a means to ensure that all Catholics accept the subordinate status of women. Yet, when Pope John Paul II ruled out the ordination of women in his letter "Ordinatio Sacerdotalis," he used the term definitive to describe his teaching, and not infallible. These documents are carefully crafted and "infallible" is missing for a reason. The pope's letter lacks proper formulation, does not use the term infallible doctrine and fails to assert that his teaching on women's ordination is necessary for salvation or divinely revealed.

The two popes have made it rather clear that they want us to believe the ban on ordaining women to the priesthood is part of the "deposit of faith." According to them, this was always taught by the church. Yet, for over 1,000 years Catholic officials practiced slavery, even owned slaves, and now they reject this teaching as abhorrent and sinful. Clearly, the Catholic church must declare Catholic women free from the shackles of slavery and oppression.

Church political activities, as well as their questionable teachings, can be clearly observed in the treatment of *some* members of the clergy, such as Bishop Morris in Australia and Fr. Roy Bourgeois here in the States. Obviously not all clergy agree with the infallibility dimension. However, any clergy who disagree with the Vatican are dealt with like Bishop Morris and Fr. Roy. Disciplinary action is swift, lest other clergy be tempted to join them. No wonder that other bishops and priests who share their belief that sexism is a sin in our Church keep silent.

Clearly authorities in the Vatican are trying to use their power to "railroad" the subordinate position of women in relation to clerical men in our Church into being "perceived" as a Church doctrine ordained by God. In this they act much more like manipulators than true spiritual leaders. With the papal seal of approval, they feel safe, and are assured that other bishops and priests will not be emboldened to speak out, making this issue more and more prevalent and accepted.

In his recent book, "Light of the World," Pope Benedict unequivocally stated women are not called to ordination; it is not part of God's plan. This is pure ideology and fails to acknowledge the pastoral practices of St. Paul. By waving the flag of infallibility, the Vatican is attempting to make the faithful docile and reluctant to trust their own inspiration from the Holy Spirit.

Silence gives consent. Catholics who sit quietly in the pews, following the doctrine of "Pay, Pray, and Obey," are consenting to the actions of the magisterium. Do we really support the current movement to maintain the subordinate position of women in our church? Or do we want to stand up and be counted as stating clearly that we do NOT agree that Jesus, who was supportive of an active role for women in his Galilean ministry, would support this view?

## "The Fr. Roy Saga"

by Sr. Beth

Roy holds onto a thread of hope that the Maryknoll community will not say he can no longer use MM behind his name. He has not received the third and final letter from the present MM leadership that he is no longer a member of the order.

After meeting with a number of his MM brothers in a religious assembly of Maryknoll, he continues to be in touch with some of the priests who were in past leadership positions among them.

Some of his colleagues agree with Roy's conviction re: women within our Church but will not express this view publicly.

He is grateful to the Maryknoll community for saying that if he cannot use MM behind his name they will continue to offer financial assistance to him as they have in the past.

He is at peace now. He commented by phone that at this time of challenge he is feeling more like a priest than ever before.

He experiences the support of many as he wrestles with this issue. He does not feel alone. He also has the assistance of a skillful canon lawyer during this time of conflict.

The Maryknoll Sisters support him, but they are a completely separate and distinct order from the Fathers and Brothers.

The MM's consists only of American men, not men from foreign countries. The Sisters have included women from other countries but the priests and brothers have not.

THEREFORE ONE CAN SEE THAT NOT ONLY IS ROY FACING A CHALLENGE WITHIN OUR INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH BUT HIS BROTHER PRIESTS AND BROTHERS ARE AS WELL.

One can see that Roy's MM community would not be "challenging" Roy in his thoughts and actions if they were not being pressured to think and act otherwise from the men in the Vatican.



## CTA Rochester North Metro

The St. John Fisher community hosted Sr. Mary Ann Dixon, OP, and she offered her reflections, via Skype, on “the Apostle to the Apostles”, Mary of Magdala. The July 21 Mass was celebrated the day before her feast day. Sr. Mary Ann honored this often maligned woman of the early church from her new location in Arizona. All are welcome at our gatherings which include refreshments and fellowship.

## Metro Detroit Branch News

This year we were so fortunate to have Liz Walters IHM give the reflection at our 11th Mary Magdalene celebration at Marygrove College. The title of our prayer service was **Mary Magdalene, Easter, and Reclaiming Vatican II.**

Saturday, August 13 - Annual CTA Picnic and Liturgy at Mary Hennig's, 8180 Allen Road, Clarkston, MI - 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Bring a dish to pass and a chair. RSVP to Mary at 248-625-3367 or email eb120246@sbcglobal.net

NOTE: A survey was sent to Metro Detroit members asking for suggestions, dates, and times for future meetings, locations and topics. If you have any ideas relating to these issues please contact Julia Archer at juliaaarcher@sbcglobal.net, Marianne Bernard mariannebernard@ymail.com or Eileen Burns eb120246@sbcglobal.net. If you would like a copy of the survey, contact Marianne.

## Macomb Branch News

Macomb's next meeting will be a Mary of Magdala celebration on Aug. 13 @ Elaine Abraham's home at 8200 Long Island Ct. in Fair Haven, Mich. 48203.

Start time: 4 p.m.

## Up-North Branch

The Sacred Quest Retreat Team (comprised of a number of CTA members) was ousted from its annual fall Augustine Center (Petoskey) venue by the Bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord because of John Chuchman's public support of marriage by people of the same gender and for criticizing church hierarchy. The Holy Spirit remained in control, however, and the annual fall retreat will be held at an even more beautiful location, The Christian Community of Lake Louise (Boyer Falls).



**Sacred Quest**  
Workshops, Seminars, In-Service Programs  
and Retreats on Grief, Caregiving, and  
Spiritual Growth and Nurturing  
**John Chuchman, MA,**  
**CDOS**  
Pastoral Bereavement Educator and  
Companion  
231-633-3464  
poetman@torchlake.com

Support this retreat (Sept 30-Oct2) by your **attendance and promotion** in the face of the Bishop's ouster will be appreciated. Call Karen Schrauben (517-517-1490) for details and check out <http://preciouspresent.invite43.com/>.

## Reflections

Jerry Schoof: “Let us be the church we want our church to be.” This statement from the welcoming ceremony at the American Catholic Council is the core of what we, as members of Call to Action, believe. I think it was also the central message of the conference. The future of our church is up to us.

For me personally, the most powerful speaker was Sr. Joan Chittister. This surprised me because I originally signed up because Hans Küng was speaking. I will say that he came in a close second.

The messages that came across were all powerful and encouraging. It was good to be in the company of those who realize so effortlessly that *we* are the Church. The diversity and inclusiveness that seemed to come forth so easily uplifted the whole gathering.

After hearing six wonderfully informed and reformed speakers and attending several breakout sessions, we concluded with one of the warmest and most welcoming liturgies that I have ever experienced. We owe much to 78-year-old Fr. Wurm who celebrated the liturgy. He, along with the planners, gave us a liturgy worth remembering as we gathered with others to plan for the future.

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### Editor Essay -Continued from page 1

- As an old Vietnam War protestor and marcher, I am encouraged by our stories of women standing up to false teachers as they walk into their million dollar cathedrals to ordain men. I am home now.

But can we do more? Can we avoid the sin of the sect and bring our church back to its salvific ways? The State CTA meeting on September 17 will provide us with the context to share ideas and bring our church back home to its roots.

It's a prodigal church and does not want to admit where it has been: eating with swine. Let's get the job done in Lansing September 17. See you there.

**Request:** Beth Rindler will coordinate a group to carpool for CTA national meeting, Milwaukee, Nov. 4-6, 2011. ([bethrin@prodigy.net](mailto:bethrin@prodigy.net))

## A DAUGHTER'S LETTER



Hi Dad,

Funny little story, and by funny I mean so bad... Dave and I had our last meeting with the priest last night to finalize the plans for the ceremony and everything, and while every meeting has been somewhat ridiculous, this was by far the worst. We had to go over the answers to our 156-question multiple choice test, which we aced by the way. But still, even though we had only like 6 answers on which we didn't match, and most of the time it was because one of us put "unsure" or got confused about having to "agree or disagree" with a question that contained a double-negative (that's confusing!!), we still had to go through every single question. Every one!

We also had to sit through a 45 minute lecture on the "three evils" (the priest's actual words, not my interpretation): abortion, sterilization, and birth control (I think I almost bit my tongue in half!!), but still, that wasn't even the worst part. When planning the ceremony he was really pushing for me and Dave to both be walked down the aisle with both of our parents, but that's not how we want to do it. I like the father-daughter thing and that's how I wanted to do it. He kept pushing though because really, "having just the father walk the bride in is out-dated and chauvinistic."

Yes, a Catholic priest told me that something was chauvinistic. FOR REAL?! That's the thing that really made me want to scream! The man who just told me that nuns taking their vows is not a sacrament like becoming a deacon, priest, or bishop is a sacrament, which only men can do, and told Dave that he didn't know about him, but he wouldn't want his wife "messing around with those chemicals in birth control" has the nerve to call something else chauvinistic. Oh, my goodness.

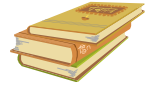
Dave said he just went to his "happy place" and stayed there until we walked out the door. I was in a much less happy place, but I guess I got through it. I think the thing that pissed Dave off the most was that he kept taking digs at Lutherans using Dave's mom as an example. His mom is a very faithful person and I for one think it's really neat that she and Bob were so cool with each other having different religions and that even now, 30+ years after being married, they still go to their separate churches and practice their faith in their own way... it's never been a conflict between them or been an issue with their kids, and the priest has the nerve to say bad things about his mom for it? So uncool!!

I'm so glad we don't have to deal with that anymore. Had this been the first meeting with the priest, I think we would have decided to take our business elsewhere and just do something at the hotel or something with a justice of the peace, which is sad because we are both spiritual people and want to have that be part of our wedding ceremony, and now we're both just kind of mad about it. Ugh... Catholics...

Anyway, in happier news—it's almost the three day weekend! And my boss is out of town so she called my co-worker Michelle last night and told her that we should leave early since it's the Friday before a holiday. We get to go at 2:00!! Woo hoo!! I really do have a nice boss!! She's coming to the wedding and I'm glad you'll get to meet her. The people I work with are so great; I can't believe how lucky I got in coming to Salem! Grad school was tough, but everything really worked out for me.

I love you, Dad!! Thanks for raising me with a real head on my shoulders so I don't gobble up the crazy from the church! -- Love, Jane

*Note:* this is a real letter but names have been changed to protect young Catholics from retaliation.



## BOOK REVIEW by John Kinkel

James Carroll, *Jerusalem, Jerusalem*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011.

Carroll's new book is a 400 page treatise about religion and violence. He asks us, among other things, to go way back to the time of Abraham and the near death of his son Isaac. Yes, it all happened in the sacred place we call Jerusalem. Why have 11 regimes fought over this plot of land and then tried to occupy its environs over the last 4,000 years? The book calls this town the "cockpit of violence." The land was perceived as sacred, rich in tradition, and worthy of man's desires to dwell there; it should be defended to the death. Millions have given their lives over the years to claim this zip code as their own. This sacred space was the home of the father of a great nation, Abraham, who thought that God wanted his beloved son Isaac sacrificed to pay homage to the Lord. David waged a great battle here and then established the Davidic dynasty that the Gospels trace to Jesus himself. Solomon built a great temple in Jerusalem where the Jews housed the Holy of Holies. The pain of desecration and defeat saddened the hearts of the Israelites after the Babylonians ravaged their city in the 6th century B.C. The great temple was no more and the Jews were slaves again. Religion, wealth, and violence have been a hallmark of Jerusalem.

Many years later Herod the Great rebuilt the temple and Jesus' disciples marveled at its beauty and splendor. Jesus was crucified outside the city, James died there and Paul held a meeting in Jerusalem in 50 A.D. to reconcile Jews and Gentiles on the issue of circumcision. The name itself can be understood according to some linguists as the "foundation of peace." But history tells us it was hardly that. The non-violent message of Jesus helped to reconcile two warring factions in early Christianity for awhile. Jerusalem was the home church of Christianity where the pillars of the church--Peter, James and John--held court.

Years later Zealots from the north occupied Jerusalem and told the Romans they had had enough. By 70 A.D. the Romans had killed some 900,000 Jews who rebelled against their occupiers. The long story of blood, violence, wealth, and greed became a part of his holy urban scene. Again the temple was destroyed and Jewish hearts were heavy once more. In the 6th century Mohammad claimed the city for Islam and his followers made the place sacred because of the famous rock where the prophet reportedly ascended to heaven. The crusades original goals (1100-1300) were to wage a war against the infidels (Muslims) to take back the Holy Lands as well as Jerusalem. Religion, wealth, power and violence are the concerns of James Carroll in this book; his goal is to uncover signs of a new religious fervor that may lead to a greater understanding of non-violence for the great monotheistic religions of our day. Religions have approved of violence to achieve dubious goals because all three actors failed to keep the city sacred (non-violent). The fact that we have relative peace in Jerusalem today may mean some leaders have come to understand the true insights of their founders. The book calls us to consider the possibility of putting a trip to Jerusalem on our bucket list before we retire to feeding birds in our backyard.



## REFLECTIONS ON OUR SILENT PROTEST AT BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHEDRAL

Women's Ordination – to demonstrate or not to demonstrate...

*By Eileen Burns, Metro Detroit CTA Branch*

In a February 8, 2011 review of the documentary, "Pink Smoke Over the Vatican," Mary Hunt reminds us that contemporary understandings of the priesthood are changing and that Catholics are confronting a fuller understanding of the entire community following in the spirit of the Jesus movement. We not only celebrate the Eucharist but we lobby for social change, we take the corporal works of mercy seriously, we teach and preach, build community and work for structural change. Ministry is a community challenge.

Hunt reminds us that Church symbols are changing also. "Individual ordinandi prostrating themselves are hard to square with this new theology. Priesthood in the old model – with vestments, clerical collars and claims to special status – is rapidly going the way of the dodo. Women do not need to resurrect or reinforce it."

Her remarks have given me pause. Will I be at next year's demonstration? Will that public witness reinforce the old model of priesthood for women? Should I be putting more effort into establishing base communities? Just where is the Spirit blowing?



## Natural Burials/Green Burials

*By Arnie Messing (arniemessing@comcast.net)*



Some prefer to speak of 'Green' burials while others prefer to use the word 'Natural' when talking about laying to rest their loved ones in a natural setting. Recently, on June 29<sup>th</sup>, several of us visited "The Preserve" which is a part of Mt. Elliott Cemetery, located in Waterford, Michigan. We came away from that visit kind of awestruck by its natural beauty and inspired by its peaceful surroundings. The scent and color of wild flowers, the sounds of birdsong, the feel of a gentle breeze blowing against our faces and beautiful landscape wherever we looked left lasting impressions as we strolled about the 50 acre part of All Saints Cemetery. The Preserve at All Saints Cemetery is a part of the Mt. Elliott Cemetery Association serving the Catholic community throughout metropolitan Detroit area since 1841. I found the entire experience unforgettable and inspirational.

Why did we visit the Preserve? It was by invitation from Marilynne Rush, RN, After Death Home Care consultant (734-395-9600 or [info@AfterDeathHomeCare.com](mailto:info@AfterDeathHomeCare.com)).

After 25 years providing health care as a hospice nurse and as a home birth midwife, now she has become interested in home funerals. She advocates with others across the country for personal choices in caring for your own dead. As Marilynne says in a DVD (After Death Home Care) "---years ago all families cared for the deceased in the home. This is still the practice in many cultures throughout the world. It is safe, simple and inexpensive." Marilynne considers it an honor to help families in this way when a loved one has died. From her experiences as a mid-wife and RN and now as a consultant for those who wish to care for their loved ones in the home after death, she has developed a kind of prayerful mantra, "birth is as safe as life gets; death is as real as life gets."

I learned so very much from my visit to The Preserve. Green/Natural burial takes place without the use of formaldehyde-based embalming, metal caskets, and concrete burial vaults. It is legal in Michigan for the family to care for their own dead in the home for a few days immediately following death. Michigan law states that a funeral director must sign the death certificate and supervise transport of the body to final disposition (crematory or cemetery), but that's all. All other after death care can be provided by family and a community of friends. Cremation is not considered green burial due to the amount of toxins released and energy used in the process. Natural/Green burials require graves to be dug only three feet. A shroud or blanket is used and the body decomposes within three months. I cannot forget the experience of standing in rather deep grass by the natural burial site of a 13 year girl buried there 3 months earlier and to so feel I was in touch with her spirit. A spiritual connection suddenly existed with someone I had never known.

An added, but unexpected, blessing for me was a chance to meet Mr. William Burr, the cemetery Director. As we talked and strolled around the Preserve I learned that he is the Uncle of a deceased classmate of mine and very dear friend for many years, Fr. Lawrence Burr (Larry). I remember Mr. Burr's parting words: "We're providing an option, an alternative to families who want the loved one's final resting place to be in a more tranquil setting. This isn't for everyone, but some people find it to be particularly comforting to have their deceased in a natural gravesite, just part of the scenery and back to the earth".

Thank you, Mr. Burr. Call him at the Preserve at All Saints Cemetery (1-800-989-9633).

# Call To Action of Michigan 2011 State Conference Saturday September 17, 2011 in Lansing

Location: Plymouth Congregational Church, 2001 E Grand River, Lansing, MI 48912

To view the detailed conference brochure go to [cta-mi.org](http://cta-mi.org)

***“We Are Seekers But We Are Not Lost”***

**Speakers:**

**Chris Schenck**

**Jamie Manson**

## **REGISTRATION FORM:**

Cost: \$40 members, \$45 after Sept. 1

\$50 non members, \$55 after Sept. 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check or money order enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: CTA MI 2011 State Conference, P.O. Box 12161, HAMTRAMCK, MI 48212

Scholarships available. Contact Eileen Burns: **tel: 313-963-0448**, email: [eb120246@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eb120246@sbcglobal.net)

Vendor space available but limited. Contact [Karen@517-627-5534](mailto:Karen@517-627-5534) or [kroses@comcast.net](mailto:kroses@comcast.net)



## **CALL TO ACTION 2011 STATE CONFERENCE:**

**“WE MAY BE SEEKERS BUT WE ARE NOT LOST”**

"Stale images of God aren't working for today's seekers", says Elizabeth Johnson, C.S.J. "New ones are emerging from the experiences of all God's people—male and female".

We at CTA-Michigan accept the challenge to address the stale images of God that aren't working for seekers today. That is why we chose the theme of the 2011 CTA-Michigan State Conference, “We May Be Seekers But We Are Not Lost.” It will be held again this year in Lansing at Plymouth Congregational church, 2001 E. Grand River 48912 on Saturday, September 17.

Jamie Manson, columnist for the *National Catholic Reporter*, will be our featured speaker. She will address ways to discover the sacred experiences we are hungering for and what it is that may bring us to a more abundant life that Jesus taught us to seek.

Jamie received her Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School where she studied Catholic theology, personal commitments, and sexual ethics with Sr. Margaret Farley RSM. Jamie was the first place winner of the 2010 Catholic Press Association award for Best Commentary—General Commentary with her reporting in the NCR. As a lay minister she has worked extensively with New York City's homeless and poor populations.

AN ADDED BONUS FOR THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE - Our friend, Chris Schenck will present her ideas on Women Leaders in Early Christianity. Truly these are the seekers upon whose shoulders we stand today. Chris' presentation will include forty-three images of catacomb frescos, newly available sarcophagi friezes, original art and mosaics of early women leaders.

-- *Marianne Bernard*

*Call To Action of Michigan*

P.O. Box 12161  
Hamtramck, Michigan, 48212

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*CTA-MI appreciates your tax-deductible donations.*



**CALENDAR  
OF EVENTS**

August 13  
CTA picnic

August 28  
CTA Washtenaw  
Eucharist. All  
Welcome.

September 17  
State Conference

November  
CTA National,  
Milwaukee,  
Nov. 4-6, 2011

**Membership Form** - 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.
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total of check PAYABLE TO CTA-MI. All \$ sent to CTA is tax deductible  
Mail check and this form to: CTA-MI; PO Box 12161; Hamtramck, MI 48212

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