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A YEAR IN REVIEW AND MORE

CALL TO ACTION is the national church reform and renewal organization of nearly 25,000 lay people, religious, priests and bishops. In the spirit of Vatican II and the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Call to Action (Detroit, 1976) we work to foster peace, justice and love in our world, our church and ourselves. We in Michigan are a vital part of this organization. We in Michigan are well known among the 40 Regional CTA Affiliates. We in Michigan have a reputation of making our presence felt at the National Conferences. CTAMI follows a simple mission statement: TO BE A PROPHETIC VOICE FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE TOWARD FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND INCLUSIVIY WITHIN THE CATHOIC CHURCH.

How are we doing? Each of us has to judge that for ourselves to some extent. Naturally there is always room for improvement, for fuller participation by more members, for adding new members, for embracing more intensely our goals and objectives. Yet, when we put the year 2007 in review we can take heart and feel good about some CTA actions.

First, a brief review of the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the Call to Action Movement Within (not outside) the Catholic Church. Isn't it a bit ironic that the circumstances surrounding this event became more newsworthy than the actual celebration? Initially the dinner and talks were to be held at St. Simon and Jude Parish, Westland. Then a few weeks before the pastor received a directive that the Cardinal was not happy to have the meeting held there. Why, one must ask?

Very quickly the site was changed to Marvaso's Italian Grill, where room for 200 guests was immediately available. It turned out to be a great 30th anniversary celebration anyway as the inspiring story of CTA to the present time was told, often humorously, by David O'Brien and Bob Heineman, while the assembly enjoyed excellent food, libations and friendship at Marvaso's (located within parish boundaries) just a couple of miles from the church property. Bob's opening remark speaks volumes about the 30th anniversary celebration: "My, how times have changed in the Church. In 1976 the Detroit hierarchy was the leading proponent of lay involvement as symbolized by the Conference. The Cardinal even closed down the seminary during the conference so that seminarians would understand the future of the Church. Now we are not even allowed to hold a party honoring the Conference on parish property in the Archdiocese". (Today seminarians, few in number compared to 30 years ago, are forbidden to attend CTA events.) Talk about a change!

But then isn't it time to ask how do 'CTA people differ from non-CTA' people? How does the hierarchy reconcile that a majority of U.S. Catholics embrace most of what CTA calls for within the church, if not openly, at least in their minds, hearts and conscience? Why does the hierarchy refuse to dialogue on issues like contraception, for example, when 87% of catholic couples (not just CTA'ers) make their own decision about birth control, or married priesthood, when 75% of Catholics, (not just CTA'ers) support it, or women deacons when 80% of Catholics (not just CTA'ers) support it, or election of priests and bishops, when 72% of Catholics (not just CTA'ers) want this, just to mention a few. Indeed, much has changed WITHIN the People of God/Church!

STATE CONFERENCE'07

By Eileen Burns

The Only Way Our Church Is Going To Change Is If We Get Active and Involved!



This year's CTA-MI State Conference was a remarkable event. After Bob McClory's insightful and energizing talk, participants broke into think tank/brainstorming groups in the afternoon as follows: Parish Life – Jeannine Daly; Selection of Bishops/Priests – Arnie Messing; Laity – Beth Rindler; Financial Accountability – Julia Archer; Sexual Abuse Crisis – Karen Schrauben and Janet Glisson.

The topics came from suggestions of members at local meetings and are the same topics that will be used at next year's Synod of the People of God. A board member chaired the individual groups.

The chairs are responsible for keeping the group together, communicating with them and sharing articles, websites and information. The purpose of the groups is to become very informed in their area of interest so that when we meet on September 19 and 20 at the Synod, CTA members will be active participants in the process. Time for review: What is a Synod? "A SYNOD IS AN ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC FAITHFUL WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO EDUCATE THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE SPIRIT OF VATICAN II, TO IDENTIFY AND DELIBERATE LOCAL CHURCH ISSUES AND TO FORMULATE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION."

If you want to be a part of one of the study groups, contact the chair and s/he will put you on their e-mail distribution list or snail mail list. The only way our Church is going to change is if we get active and involved. CTA-MI is providing a way to do just that.

(A note from Bob McClory: "Ron & Rosemary: We want you to know we got back safely and thank you for your hospitality and the opportunity to be with CTA Michigan. I have rarely been with such an energized, outspoken and supportive group in all these years on the trail! I had a talk and book signing at Loyola University Tuesday, and while the crowd of about 80 was welcoming and interested (and did buy books), they were no match for the Body of Christ I found in Saginaw. We value your friendship and your cheerful share in the struggle.")

MICHIGAN PEACE

TEAM – Joe Droste, Lansing CTA, joined Michigan Peace Team's violence reduction mission to Israel and Palestine. They did check point watches, documented human rights violations and educated for peace. Israeli and Palestinian people told the team, "Now more than ever international peace teams are needed in Palestine to walk with Palestinian and Israeli people who are working non-violently to create a society grounded in peace and justice." Congratulations, Joe. Call to Action commends you for your courageous endeavor.

Again in 07, Call to Action members took a public stand in support of the men and women who feel called to ordination by joining in peaceful demonstration at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Detroit, on the occasion of ordination of two men to priesthood. Refreshments were served after the demonstration at Gail Hafner's home.

Sr. Kate Kuentler's

itinerary in March, (07) Kalamazoo, Lansing, Ann Arbor, Detroit Metro and Saginaw, an educational tour, informing us about the New Code of Canon Law (1983) and how 27 Canons spell out rights and responsibilities of the Lay Christian Faithful, opening up new doors of awareness of one's Baptismal call and one's response to being catholic in the new definition of church, the People of God. Her informative and enthusiastic presentation to so many at all five different locations served to ground us in Canon Law and Theology of Church for Synod 08.

Joyce and Ron Mason receive 07 In the Spirit Award "In recognition of your deep and unwavering commitment to Vatican II principles, to the mission of Call to Action, to your dedication to bridge-building and dialogue in promoting peace and justice through creative liturgy and the arts and through living every day in the Spirit of the Gospel." (Words on Award)



Two CTA members ordained

Womenpriests -- Cheryl Bristol and Mary Ellen Robertson, were ordained on Sunday, May 27, 2007, Toronto, Canada. Thoughts expressed by Rosemary Moon –“I’ve been reading what others have said about how beautiful, hopeful and fulfilling it was to be there and actually observe the real thing. This is the second one I’ve attended, being Cheryl’s ‘sponsor’”. Ron went with me this year.

It is truly a moving experience for a cradle Catholic who has chafed and dreamed of a different sort of church as I grew and matured in my faith. Now I’ve decided I belong to the “underbelly” of the Church. Some day I’m certain it will all “roll over” and this movement will be the surface of the living, growing community of the Catholic Church.

It reminds me of the other struggle of women in the nineteenth century when they fought so valiantly for suffrage. Those women were strong, brave and willing to put themselves on the line for the sure knowledge that they had a right to vote and were determined to see it happen.

Now we see the same bravery and determination again, here and now; the same gumption that has been the backbone of government and yes, the Church, throughout the ages. The ordination of these women is a milestone in the history of our human development! How wonderful to be alive to see and be a part of it. God bless the women!

Love, Rosemary

Sister Beth Rindler meets Bishop Fabian

Bruskewitz face to face at St. John’s Center and gently confronts him about ‘excommunicating’ CTA people of Nebraska.

In their brief conversation together Sr. Beth asked him directly why he did not talk with the people associated with Call to Action. Instead of engaging her in further conversation the bishop began moving silently away from her, perhaps as if to say we have nothing more to talk about. She introduced herself as Sister Beth, A Franciscan Sister of the Poor.

Thanks, Sr. Beth, our president for your sincerity and your bravery. The people of Nebraska are grateful to you, and so are all of us, for reaching out in a Christ like manner to Bishop Bruskewitz and to show solidarity with CTA people there.

In addition to the seven events listed above, CTA MI people celebrated the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene at various locations around Michigan, thereby working to restore her rightful place in Christian history as the first to witness the resurrection of Jesus and to restore her image as a strong woman witness to us. CTAMI people continued to participate in book study groups and to celebrate home liturgies. Board members held meeting quarterly to do the business of CTA and plan activities. CTAMI newsletters were published quarterly. Upon review of the past year’s activities it is clear that CTAMI members continue to grow intellectually and spiritually. It was a good year!

WASHTENAW ... The Washtenaw Area CTA continues to have monthly liturgies followed by potlucks in members' homes. Generally, about 15 - 20 people in attendance with various members conducting a liturgy theme with dialog homily.

In March 2007, Sr. Kate Kuenstler presented background information on the Lay Synod in Ann Arbor for CTA membership and the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti community at large. It was very well attended due in part for an article that Washtenaw CTA was able to get into the Ann Arbor News. -- The Washtenaw Area CTA membership composed and signed a letter in support of Nebraska CTA and sent it to Nebraska CTA and church hierarchy in Nebraska and Michigan.

The Washtenaw Area CTA's Board of Directors has approved a plan to develop a web-based blog and discussion forum to allow our membership to discuss via the internet various religion-related and social justice issues. It is the Board's hope that employing the use of new technology will help disseminate information about CTA to younger persons. -- *Randy*

KALAMAZOO ... There has been little response from the Kalamazoo members in the last 6 months. Jim and Kim will continue to try and have some activity in Western Michigan and if there are folks out there who would like a discussion of Morwood's latest book before his arrival in March or who would like to begin talking about the possibility of forming an intentional Eucharistic community please get in touch with us. We are grateful for the three people who responded to our last email regarding participation in a local group. Hopefully those who attend the annual meeting will have a debriefing session after they return and we can get some feedback out to the rest of the west Michigan members. In the meantime, we wish blessings on all the good work that many of those members are doing for justice and peace. -- Still hoping, *Kim Franke*

Call To Action of Michigan

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DEARBORN, MI

*Unlike some organizations,
National Call to Action does
not share dues with CTA-
MI. Therefore, we really
appreciate your support
when you send dues and
donations to CTA-MI.*

Attention, all CTA members of Michigan Chapter and Ann Arbor!

PREPARE NOW FOR TWO EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR 2008

The itinerary of Michael Morwood in March 2008:

**March 3, Washtenaw; March 4, Detroit; March 5, Lansing;
March 6, Kalamazoo and March 7, Saginaw.**

Michael has been with us before after his second book, *"Tomorrow's Catholic, Understanding God and Jesus in a New Millennium.* Now he comes after his fifth book, *"From Sand to Solid Ground, Questions of Faith for Modern Catholics."*

Morwood specializes in adult faith formation. He is interested in helping Christians examine what they believe and why they believe it, what they imagine and why they imagine the way they do. He is interested in helping articulate faith in Jesus in ways that resonate with contemporary understanding of our place in the universe. We look forward to his second time around for all MI CTA'ers and all who want to come.

The second BIG EVENT in 08 is the SYNOD!

Much has been said and written about this over the past year. The time is drawing near, September 19 and 20, 2008. It will be held in the Detroit area, the exact location to be announced later. The really exciting news is that Tom Roberts, past editor of NCR and currently News director and Editor-at-large will be the keynote speaker. Say no more. That's as good as it gets!

