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## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Call to Action

### A Preparation Phase:

In 1974, Cardinal John Dearden, Archbishop of Detroit and head of the National Bishop's Conference, called for a TWO YEAR PERIOD of discernment to prepare for the implementation of documents of Vatican II across the United States. Dioceses were invited to hold parish discussions to ascertain the needs and concerns of Catholic people.

Thousands of people responded. National hearings and six regional hearings were held around the country. A process of consultation unique in the annals of the Church got under way to help determine how the Catholic community might more effectively address pressing issues of peace, justice and human development. People spoke up: over 800,000 parish respondents; over 1500 delegates representing 125 dioceses, 100 delegates representing an equal number of national organizations. SOMETHING BIG WAS HAPPENING! It was a call to bishops, priests, religious, lay Christian faithful to work at better understanding the meaning and mission of the Church in the years ahead. Cardinal Dearden was determined to lead all of us into a deeper awareness of understanding THE CHURCH AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD!

### The Conference:

Detroit's Cobo Hall became hallowed ground in the Fall of 1976 when 1,351 lay, religious and clergy delegates, appointed by their local bishops, gathered to listen, to speak, to share, to pray and then to vote for an INCLUSIVE CHURCH, open to women and married priests, with shared decision-making among all the People of God. Cardinal Dearden hailed the moment and the collaborative effort to bring all the issues to the table as "a new way of doing the work of the church in America". It was exciting! It was birthing a renewed Church! One can't miss the joy, the enthusiasm, the love, the challenge in the Cardinal's own final words, "this weekend we have experienced a new way of being Church. Go home and keep us bishops accountable"! The words on the Conference brochure were very clear, "With Liberty and Justice for All, A Call to Action". Can there, will there ever be another moment like it? Surely, yes!

### Thirty (30) years later:

Who dropped the ball? The bishops? The priests? The religious? The laity? Or all of the above? Sadly, this is a question some are asking as we prepare to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Call to Action. Some might ask were our hopes too high in '76', the bicentennial year of country and of church in the U.S.? Some will say the bishops were not prepared to field the hot grounders (topics) coming at them. (Ask any Detroit Tiger about the importance of skill level) Some will say the priests, the first string regulars were not given enough chance to play at the local level. Perhaps still others will say the lay Christian faithful dropped the ball big

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**A Letter** was sent in May to Reverend Camillari, the only person ordained for the Archdiocese of Detroit this year. Here a portion of that letter:

Dear Reverend Camillari,

Metro Detroit Call to Action congratulates you on your call to serve God in the priesthood. Our prayers and good wishes are with you and your family on this special day.

However, there is deep sadness in the hearts of many people. Metro Detroit CTA members believe there are countless other men and women who have been called to priesthood, but are denied ordination because of man-made laws and prejudice. This attitude of the institutional Church is a form of elitism, similar to a country club that refuses admission to women, people of color or homosexuals. We find this regrettable.

We are concerned for the faithful who are not ministered to because of the shortage of priests and the clustering and closing of parishes. We believe that the very sacramental life of our Church is at stake. Metro Detroit CTA members cannot in good conscience stand by and not speak out.

Peace, Call To Action of Michigan Board of Directors  
Sr. Beth Rindler SFP, President

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

PRAYER + ACTION + INSPIRATION + FUN =  
**UPCOMING CTA-DETROIT/METRO  
NORTH EVENTS**

**SATURDAY, July 21, 7:00 p.m.**

Mary Magdalene Celebration  
St. Peter's Episcopal Church  
1950 Trumbull, Detroit, MI  
Reflection by Mary Ellen Gondeck SSJ



**SATURDAY, August 11, 2:00 –5:00 p.m.**

CTA Picnic, Liturgy, Potluck  
@ Mary Hennig's - Bring dish to pass & lawn chair  
8180 Allen Road, Clarkston, MI



*A rainy, dreary day couldn't dampen the determination of these loyal CTAers to demonstrate in support of the women and married men who feel called to priestly ordination. Thanks to Gail Hafner who opened her home to us after the demonstration.*

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

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time by not "holding their bishops accountable". But this is not about a blame game. This is about a GRAND CELEBRATION of many things, a kind of 7<sup>th</sup> inning stretch, as we continue to play out this wonderful work of renewing the Church. Maybe it's just getting started.

So, you must come to the Celebration on August 22, at St. Simon and Jude Parish, Westland, to hear the rest of the story from a professional historian as far as Call to Action goes. There is promise of excellent food and libations on the altar of friendship, sharing of inspirational stories and humorous stories, of opportunities to renew friendships and to be renewed in spirit.

Just come and be a part of a marvelous evening. Perhaps in the end we will understand better that in reality THE BALL WAS NOT DROPPED after all. The Conference was and remains historically an inspirational event. All of the work since then is worth celebrating.

All Call to Action members deserve a chance to sit back, take a break and enjoy a big pat on the back for all the efforts in at least trying to heed the Cardinal's final admonition. -- Arnie

## Lansing area news - - - News come from two new persons, Karen Rose and Janet Glisson, now

representing Lansing area instead of Joe Droste. Much thanks to you, Joe, for the excellent work and reporting you have done over many years. We'll miss you, but look forward to hearing from Karen and Janet at newsletter time.

Karen and Jan report a 're-launch' on September 13, beginning with a potluck and a speaker, John Chuchman, doing a presentation titled "WE ARE CHURCH". The location and time will be announced to all Lansing chapter people. They hope this gathering will provide a good opportunity for people to become better acquainted with each other and to better understand their connection to the larger CTA group.

Note from Karen: "I know Jan can't make the July 22 meeting of the board, but I will attend. Joe said he was bringing me along to introduce me to others. It's all an exciting and scary time. New beginnings hold bits of both: the excitement and the challenges of learning."

# Womenpriest Ordinations

*Sunday, May 27, 2007 Toronto, Canada*

Several CTA members attended the Ordination ceremony of Cheryl Bristol and Mary Ellen Robertson on Sunday, May 27, 2007 in Toronto, Canada. Gerry Sellman, SCMM, Rosemary Moon, Jen Marcus, and Beth Rindler, SFP, wrote about their experiences to be printed in the newsletter, each an inspirational account. However, there just isn't enough space to print all of them in one newsletter, but will be in future ones.

The following is from Mary Ellen Roberston, now a womanpriest from Michigan:

## ***From Mary Ellen Robertson ---***

“The standing-room only crowd of over 200 People of God/de witnessed the Ordinations of Cheryl Bristol and Mary Ellen Robertson of Michigan and Marie Bouelin of Sudbury, Canada who were ordained Roman Catholic Womenpriests. Alice Iaquina of Wisconsin, Monica Kilburn-Smith of Calgary and Jim Lauder of British Columbia, Canada became ordained to the Diaconate. Patricia Fresen of Germany, one of only four Roman Catholic women bishops worldwide, officiated. The Ordinations were done in the Roman Rite and held at West Hill United Church of Christ in Toronto on Pentecost Sunday, May 27, 2007.

West Hill United Rev. Gretta Vosper said the group chose her church through a member from Ottawa who

found it to be a welcoming place. Vosper, who runs the Canadian Centre for Progressive Christianity, said West Hill's congregation, “is very honored to be part of the journey these women are on”.

Alexandra, a liturgical dancer led the opening procession by swirling a banner, which produced a unique sound, symbolizing the wind of Ruach. The movement of Ruach was dancing, the Spirit was in creative motion in many hearts. My prayer that morning was that the graces of my ordination would touch each person attending in a very special way.

I know She did for my younger sister who had not been to church in a very long time, who was very moved and said that being there was a stepping stone for her to consider a richer meaning in her life. She asked me to bless her the next day, as did my brother Rev. Bob Schaden who presented me for ordination and my friend Rita McEachen Neal (Detroit) who read the Wisdom reading (7:22-28) with great passion.

Roman Catholic Womenpriests' mission is to spiritually prepare, ordain and support women and men from all walks of life who are committed to an inclusive model of the church and are called to minister to their communities in a renewed Catholic Church.

This glorious day in Toronto gave hope and graces to many, including the media. I thank my husband, John, family, friends and all who have come forward to support me in this prophetic call as a womanpriest. I celebrate you”.

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## Michigan Call to Action State Conference, October 13, 2007

How fortunate we are to have once again such a renowned speaker as Robert McClory for our event. He has been a former CTA National board member, a frequent presenter at National Conferences, the author of three books about Catholic history, and now author of a new book, “As It Was In the Beginning: The Coming Democratization of the Catholic Church”. In fact, his presentation at this year's National will cover the essentials of his latest book. What a golden opportunity for all of us in CTA MI, not only to hear this brilliant scholar and professor of journalism at Northwestern University, but to become the first beneficiaries of his book. In a word, we've arranged to bring an important part of the NOVEMBER NATIONAL CONFERENCE to our OCTOBER MICHIGAN CONFERENCE!

Why come to our Conference? Many issues are brewing today within the Catholic Church. Historically correct information about these issues is vital in understanding them. Examples of issues today: growing support for a married priesthood; people organizing to keep parishes open from Boston to New York, from Cleveland to Detroit, from Sarnia to Toronto, Canada; eighty percent of Sunday celebrations in Brazil are led by Catholic laity. Women in Church ministry are on the rise everywhere; women are being ordained Womenpriests. The role of Lay Christian Faithful is expanding.

Fr. Richard McBrien reports: “There are bishops and other church leaders who recognize that obligatory celibacy for priests of the Latin rite cannot survive much longer...There is a critical mass who are open to the ordination of women...and who find the prohibition even of discussing the matter to be unrealistic and counter-productive.”

Could Bob McClory just happen to be the best Catholic Church historian for us today? Could our Fall Conference be the most important one yet, especially as we prepare for the Synod 2008? Don't miss this opportunity!

But lets not forget another important reason to attend the Conference. We are Call to Action people. We need each other's support. We need to bond and enjoy each other's company and enjoy all the other treats of the day. Saginaw people never let us down. **So, start making plans to be at St. Andrew Church Saginaw, October 13, 2007.**

