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Meet Fr. Roy Bourgeois, M.M.

Speaker at the Annual CTA of Michigan Conference

Saturday, September 11, 2010

(See page 5 for details)



Energetic and passionately committed would be two good ways to describe *Maryknoll* priest and activist, Fr *Roy Bourgeois*. Having grown up in Louisiana, he served as a naval officer for four years, including a year of shore duty in Vietnam. For his service, he received the *Purple Heart*.

After his military service, he entered the *Maryknoll* Missionaries Order and was ordained a *Catholic priest* in 1972. He worked with the poor of Bolivia for five years before being arrested and forced to leave the country.

In 1980, Fr. Roy became involved in issues surrounding U.S. policy in El Salvador after the murder of four U.S. churchwomen, two of them his *Maryknoll* Sisters and friends. He has continued to be an outspoken critic of U.S. foreign policy and spent over four years in U.S. federal prisons for non-violent protests against injustice.

In 1990, Fr. Roy founded the *School of the Americas Watch* to research, educate, and activate others to oppose the military training of Latin American soldiers at *Fort Benning, Georgia*. More recently he has spoken publicly about his support for *Roman Catholic women* who recognize a call to ordination for priestly ministry, seeing this as another important work of Justice.

The Mission of Call to Action of Michigan

is to be a prophetic voice committed to the formation and support of inclusive Catholic communities of faith in the Spirit of Vatican II. This mission, rooted in the life and message of Jesus, compels us to reach out to empower people in justice, love, and compassion.

CTA-Metro Detroit will host its 10th annual **Mary Magdalene Prayer Service**, "*Faithful to the Core*" on **Thursday, July 22, 2010** at Sacred Heart Church, 22430 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn, MI at 7:00 p.m. Come and celebrate the life and legacy of Mary Magdalene, the other women at the foot of the cross, and those who are role models of faithfulness to the Gospel message. Refreshments after the celebration (If you can bring a treat, please contact Julia Archer at 313-562-2423).

Joy-filled Celebration of Baptism

- By Mary Ellen Robertson

Both as a nurse and a chaplain long before being ordained a Roman Catholic Woman priest, I baptized children and adults. Yet, on August 20, 2009, a whole family understood the joy of Baptism as I baptized three children ages, Julia (7), Emily (6) and Kyle (4) from two families at our home church in Muskegon.

A few months prior, the Grandmother came to me expressing a desire to have her three grandchildren baptized. I counseled her that it was important that the desire for baptism come from the parents and children. And if desired the families may have a Eucharistic Liturgy along with the baptism rite. All of the families said, "Yes, we would like that".

The process of preparing for this joyful event began. The families chose the grandparents to be Godparents for all three children. We arranged a Preparation Meeting where we talked about their desire for the Sacrament of Baptism and what it meant for them and about prayer and what prayer was like for them.

Kelly, and older child who was baptized, raised her hand to say "I pray every night".

Her mother's face showed surprise. A joyful and holy silence filled the living room.

The gift of her baptism showed through.

The day of the baptism the children welcomed those who came to celebrate by handing out the Liturgy cards and music. A baptism space on the deck was prepared with baptismal candles, oil and three small stoles which I handmade for the children. After I baptized each child, Kelly, waved bubbles over each of them which brought delight and tears to Julia and Emily's dad.

We prayed the Eucharistic prayers together, broke the bread and shared the grape juice in 3 small goblets for the children and one cup for the adults. I congratulated the children on receiving their first communion and Kyle's father said with delight, "This was my first communion too".

Julia and Emily's dad shed tears, saying "This Liturgy and Baptism touched our hearts so deeply. We thank you. We thank you. We shared a Pot Luck meal together, celebrated and shared the joy of life giving sacrament of Word, Spirit and story.

Bishop blesses condoms

A few years ago, the bishop of Maputo, Mozambique came to celebrate Mass at one of his parishes. Afterwards he took questions from the congregation. The first question was, "what is the Church's position on condoms?" The question posed from an AIDS-ravaged continent related to the Vatican's teaching that condoms cannot be used even if one's partner is HIV positive.

"God clearly tells us that we must protect life at all costs. Not to do so is a serious sin against God", the bishop replied. He continued using the ABC rule, "What does this mean to you and to me? It means that A is for abstinence and looking around at all of you today, many of you cannot live by that advice. Let us be realistic; few if any of you can abstain.

Which brings us to B, be faithful. Some of you are faithful; many of you are not. So that leaves us with C, condoms. Now many of you believe that condoms are a crime against God and using them is a sin. But I am here today to tell you otherwise. You see if you are HIV positive and you have unprotected sex and infect someone, you have in the eyes of God, committed murder. Or if you are HIV negative and you have unprotected sex with someone who is infected, you have in the eyes of God, committed suicide." He concluded, "So, my children, wearing a condom is not a sin, not wearing one is" (Excerpt by Daniel Maguire in 'Conscience', 2010)

Rome - *More than 800 women superiors* representing some 800,000 religious sisters around the globe spent five days in May trying to "renew and re-gather" themselves "in order speak our word of truth". The leader, Sr. Maureen Cusick, said the assembly would reflect on the prophetic and mystical aspect of apostolic religious life as "it is rooted in silence where God's love is aflame".

The leadership is especially concerned about the manner in which a Vatican investigation into American women religious communities was decided and implemented unilaterally by Roman Curia officials. A note on the program read: "The Audience with the Holy Father has been cancelled." (The Tablet 8 May 2010)

Minnesota Alert: The Catholic Coalition for Church Reform, a Twin Cities-based organization of eight national groups will hold a Synod of the Baptized on Saturday, 18 September 2010, in Minneapolis, entitled "Claiming our place at the table".

The synod will discuss practices that will bring our local church more in line with the Gospel of love. About 70 local Catholics have been preparing in 10 work/study groups since April 2009.

Keynote address by theologian Paul Lakeland. Remember him? He was our Michigan CTA Conference keynote speaker several years ago, following his book "The Liberation of the Laity: In Search of an Accountable Church".

IT'S CTA-MI PICNIC TIME!!

Come, eat, drink, chat, and laugh,
Celebrate Eucharist, enjoy Mary's beautiful garden with
CTA members and friends

WHEN:

Saturday, August 14, 2010

1:00: Liturgy followed by Pot Luck

WHERE:

Mary Hennig's beautiful backyard/garden
8180 Allen Rd, Clarkston, MI 48348 * 248-625-3367

RSVP: Mary Hennig (248-625-3367) or Eileen Burns (313-963-0448) by August 11.

Bring a chair and a dish to pass.



A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Blessed Sacrament Cathedral - By Lourdes Fonseca

Well, no, not really, but plenty of funny things happened while we were demonstrating OUTSIDE the Cathedral on Ordination Saturday. People including priests, walked past us winking, nodding, mouthing, "Thank you for doing this", or "Good for you!" People passing by not familiar with the Catholic religion would, "What do your signs about faith and inclusion mean?" I explained that the Church continues with its discriminatory practice of not giving women an equal place at the Table. Their response to our action was encouraging; "Good, I am glad you are speaking out!"

Not all comments were positive. Like the man said that any opposition to the Church was a sin. Any opposition? I wanted to ask - because we oppose the way the Church has handled the child molestation crisis - that too is a sin? Talk about falling into the rabbit hole! Then there was the man who told us to take our "s**t" and go somewhere else. He quickly turned around and scurried into the church. A man and woman looking like they were going to a high-end fashion show told us to join the Episcopalians. The message was clear; YOU are not welcomed HERE. This was supposed to be a silent vigil - in others words I had to keep my big mouth shut. It's hard, especially when I wanted to yell back---- "Why should I leave? It is MY church, too." But I did not yell, not that time.

I did, however, fail to keep quiet when a woman drove by with a sign written on the flap of an old cardboard box in what looked like eyeliner stating; "We love our priests." She hung out the car window while holding the sign screaming at the top of her lungs: "WEEEE LOOOOVE OUR PRIIIIIESTS!" Sorry, it was automatic, the words just tumbled out my mouth. So, so sorry.....but I yelled back. Yes I did yell back, not in an angry tone, but I do sheepishly admit to yelling, I did want to be heard after all..... "SO DO WEEEEEE!"

What makes her think we don't love our priests? Well, maybe not the lily-livered priests, I don't particularly care much for them. I don't much care for the ones who show up in the nice new, luxury vehicles either. There was one priest being taxied in a Hummer. Can you imagine Jesus showing up in a Hummer? Or a Cadillac? Or a Lincoln? Or a Lexus? No, He probably would have gotten off the city bus, picked up a sign and walked with us.



PROPHETIC PEOPLE: Sue Masiak, Mary Kay Martin, Julia Archer, Joyce Mason, Laura Perrault, Mary Jo McEvoy, Ron Mason, Rolando, Lourdes Fonseca, George McMahan, Mary Anne Dunmire. Not pictured: Patsy McMahan, Jim Masiak, Gail Hafner.

Embracing and Shaping Our Future as Church

- By Eileen Burns

NOTE: This is the first in a number of articles about intentional communities.

I invite you to share your thoughts with our readers by contacting your local branch coordinator.



Dorothy Day in her book, “The Long Loneliness” suggests that we spend much of our lives searching for community. No matter where we find it – in our family, neighborhood, friends, work environment – we need to relate to people, rub shoulders, have some friction, do good, leave the world better than we found it, go beyond ourselves to The Other. For many of us, the Catholic Church provided that community. Our parishes educated, socialized, taught us Gospel values and often served as a surrogate parent. For reasons of which we are all aware, today that is not always the story. Fact: 10% of the people in the United States are people who have left the Catholic Church -- 30 million people. The second largest Christian denomination in our country now are those who used to be Catholic in a practicing way. Do they just disappear into thin air? Join other churches? Now watch *Meet the Press* on Sunday mornings? Feel lost? Angered? Abandoned?

More and more Catholics are taking ownership for their spiritual development and forming various types of prayerful, supportive and justice focused communities. Some have a priest as a member; others do not. Those communities who do are called Intentional Eucharistic Communities (IECs). According to www.intentionaleucharisticcommunities.org, IECs are those small faith communities, rooted in the Catholic tradition, which gather to celebrate Eucharist on a regular basis. Born in the enthusiasm flowing from Vatican II for a church of the people, some IECs were instituted in parishes, some were created as alternatives to the parish, some retain close ties with the institutional church, and some function independently. All are characterized by shared responsibility for the governance and life of the community. Through sharing liturgical life and mutual support for one another, members are strengthened to live Gospel-centered lives dedicated to spiritual growth and social commitment.

Sandy Abraham of Livonia has first-hand experience with an intentional Eucharistic community. She and her husband, Gary, along with seven other families are the founding members of the Spirit of Hope community. “We began when we could no longer remain in our suburban parish because of differences with the pastor. Yet we wanted community for our families. The children all attended public school. Therefore, we had to be quite structured with religious education and sacramental preparation. The greatest challenge was the need for a bishop to confirm. We met every Monday for religious ed., bible study or liturgy. It required very strong commitment and we had that. During the first years we also traveled together on Sunday to city churches.” We started visiting city churches because we knew that we had to do some social justice outreach, so decided to visit parishes we grew up in. We were impressed by the city pastors and their parish families and what the parishes were doing for the poor in their community.”

After over thirty years, the Spirit of Hope community continues to meet. “There has never been a down side to choosing to form community,” says Sandy. “It has given us the stability that the Catholic Church continues to take away. More than thirty years later, we no longer have or need the structure we had. For our children, our community remains a very positive and important source of spiritual support.”

Not all intentional communities are IEC by definition. Some intentional communities may have members preside at the Eucharist while others focus on social justice issues. We will share stories of these groups in our next newsletter.



In mid November, as CTA President, I wrote a letter to former President Jimmy Carter recognizing how difficult it must have been for him to leave the Southern Baptist Conference, after 60 years of membership, due to their unwillingness to recognize women as equals. In that letter I explained our mission with the Roman Catholic Church, as members of CTA, to lead lay people in learning how to minister to one another, and deepen individual and community spirituality instead of abandoning our tradition. In the letter I also recognized both his prophetic words about greed and its effects on our culture, dating back to the 1980's, and his continuing efforts at helping our working poor through Habitat for Humanity.

Former President Jimmy Carter, in a handwritten message, thanked me for the letter, and wished us all best wishes in our good work. I will frame the letter, and continue to commend an American Hero, and man of deep and committed faith, Jimmy Carter.

Jeannine Daly, CTA of Michigan, President

CTA-MI Welcomes A New Vice-President

Call to Action-MI welcomes Linda Schmidt of Saginaw to the position of Vice President. Schmidt replaces Jim Rose of Kalamazoo who resigned to further pursue his studies. Jim did a remarkable job as VP and we thank him for his years of service. Jim and his wife, Kim Franke, will continue to co-chair the Kalamazoo branch, and Jim will remain our webmaster.

Linda is a prophetic and grounded addition to the Board. "I am a social justice advocate in every aspect of my life. In my professional job, I serve as the Poverty Policy Director for the State of Michigan. In my research with MSU, I am committed to connecting poor people to social policy. And in my personal life, I would like to see the day when I can rationally justify to my children why the Catholic Church remains a vehicle for social justice. Because I struggle to do so, I want to become involved with CTA to at least do what I can to continue to engage the debate around what it means to be Catholic and the centrality of social justice to that identity."

Welcome, Linda!

Annual CTA of Michigan Conference:

Shatter the Stained Glass Ceiling

with Maryknoll Priest, Fr. Roy Bourgeois

*"Excluding women from priesthood
is a grave injustice . . . always immoral."*

Saturday, September 11, 2010

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Plymouth Congregational Church

2001 E Grand River Ave, Lansing, MI 48912



Cost: Call to Action Members: \$45 (\$40 before 8/27)

Others: \$55 (\$50 before 8/27) -- Students \$20

Scholarships: Eileen Burns, (313) 963-0448, eb120246@sbcglobal.net

Vendors (\$50): Karen Schrauben, (517) 627-5534, kroses@comcast.net

Send **CTA Michigan 2010 Conference Registration** to:
CTA-Michigan, PO Box 12161, Hamtramck, MI 48212

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone and Email: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

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*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.*

*“Excluding women from priesthood is a grave injustice in our
Church. I believe our Church’s teaching on this issue is wrong and
does not stand up to scrutiny. Sexism is a sin, and no matter how
hard or how long we may try to justify discrimination, in the end, it is
always immoral” - - Fr. Bourgeois*

CALL TO ACTION - MICHIGAN

HERE IS MY Membership Contribution

\$40 family membership _____, \$25 single membership _____, other _____

_____ I am unable to contribute at this time. Please keep me on the mailing list.

_____ I am between 18-42 years of age; I would like to receive the CTA “next Gen” information.

_____ I would like to be actively involved in one of the branches: Metro Detroit _____,
North Metro Detroit _____, Kalamazoo _____, Saginaw _____, Lansing _____, Ann Arbor _____.

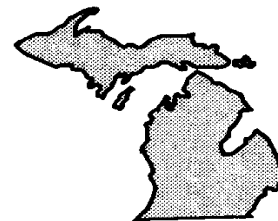
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Questions/comments: Please contact our president: Jeannine Daly, mikedaly@tir.com, 248-651-7075