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PEOPLE WITH HOPE

People with hope don't need to win to validate their dreams; they need only be part of a process that they believe is important". Perhaps this statement from CORPUS best characterizes the people of CTA Michigan as the year 2005 comes to an end and the dawn of a New Year draws near. We have been in step with CTA National on some key issues throughout 2005. We begin 2006 in the same step, inspired by Psalm 76, "You call us to love, to grow toward harmony and wholeness. You well up in our hearts with the injunction to liberate all the oppressed of the earth."

Consider just a few examples of how CTA/MI is part of a process. Metro Detroit branch held a reception for Jeannine Gramick. Five hundred people viewed her Documentary at the Royal Oak Main Art Theater. Those who attended came away from the experience blessed and more committed to being people of peace. Bishop Gumbleton received a thunderous standing ovation when he arrived to attend; Cardinal Maida stood opposed to the event and did not allow a reception for Jeannine to be held on Church property. Part of a process in reaching out to gay and lesbian people of Michigan?

Stopping the proliferation of nuclear bombs is about Life, about Community, about Family and about loving our Planet. So, some CTA people traveled to Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to give voice and to stand tall with the Stop the Bombs (STB) campaign. Some were arrested for civil disobedience in front of the Y-12 nuclear plant in Oak Ridge. Part of a process in eliminating nuclear bombs and working toward world peace? (Oppenheimer said, after dropping the atomic bombs in Japan, "Now we scientists know sin." He refused to help develop the Hydrogen Bomb. Was he too part of a process?)

Billboards and demonstrations were present near Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at Ordinations again, encouraging Bishops to be faithful to the earliest Church traditions by ordaining married men and women to the priesthood. These have become part of a process to bring about a change toward equality, inclusivity, justice and freedom.

Holding local Church leaders accountable for the financial decisions that affect priorities and holding Bishops accountable for not doing their job and protecting the young from clerical sexual abuse are addressed now via a Governance subcommittee. Regular meetings are held by this committee. Answers to their questions often are slow in coming from the authorities, but as part of the process, vigilance is now ongoing.

"Fifty people attended a very nice service in honor of Mary Magdalen in July", reports Rosemary Moon from the Saginaw branch. The Saginaw News and the Catholic Weekly gave it very good coverage.

PEOPLE OF HOPE

Continued from page 1.

Hundreds of such celebrations around the country and several in Michigan are being held now annually in honor of Mary of Magdala.

It's all part of the process to reverse thousands of years of misrepresentation of her as a wanton woman in need of repentance and to restoring her as a strong woman leader, a feminine role model for the Church in the 21st century.

To continue this list of examples could take up the entire newsletter if we were to list activities from Lansing branch, reported by Joe Droste, such as marches on the State Capital steps, book study gatherings, home Liturgies /Eucharists, etc., or activities reported by Kim Franke of Kalamazoo, or persons from Washtenaw branch. Suffice it to say that people of CTA/MI continue to validate their dreams by keeping up the good fight, by staying in the process, in bringing about what they believe is important as Catholic people, prepared to carry on. Please join in, all CTA'ers of MI in 2006.

– Arnie Messing

SAD NEWS

By Eileen Burns

For years now CTA Metro Detroit member and "In the Spirit" award winner, Mary Hennig, has been writing to death row inmates. At every opportunity she encouraged us to be more aware and to speak for that voiceless population in our society. At various CTA functions Mary takes up a collection and sends the money to her "pen pals."

Thanks to Mary, about four years ago, I began to write to John Nixon, a death row inmate at Parchman Prison in Mississippi. I sent him pictures of our CTA picnics at Mary's house so he could see his CTA friends and Mary's lovely gardens. John and I became friends. I am sad to report that on December 14 at the age of 77, John was executed. In his last letter he wrote, "Don't worry about me. I am OK. I

have lived a fairly long time (77). I would not have long to live even if they should set me free. I won't die in a wreck or drown in a river, a train won't run over me. I am free of cancer and heart trouble and I know just to the minute that I will go. I know God has a place for me, so I'm ready. Maybe sometime in a distant future we can be together and really see what the rainbow is made of. Thank all my CTA friends for their prayers and support."

Love always, John

HABEMUS PRESIDENTEM ET SECRETARIEM

According to our By-laws, the President and Secretary of CTA of MI are elected in uneven and our Treasurer and Vice-President in even years.

Responding to our September newsletter, members nominated people for the two uneven year posts. The nominating committee contacted each nominee and received many "not this year, I'm too overwhelmed" replies.

Two people were generous with their response:

- Beth Rindler, who temporarily as Vice-President had filled the position, now will officially be our President for the next two years.
- Rosemary Moon whose minutes have actually reflected what goes on in our meetings in previous years, has agreed to be Secretary for another two year term.

Since the positions were uncontested there were no mailed ballots. They will be installed at our January board meeting and CTA of MI will continue its tradition of dedicated leadership.

Nominating Committee:

Julia Ann Archer,
Marianne Botorowicz



CTA-MI joined other organizations in Catholics Speak Out in placing an ad in NCR on Oct, 14, 2005. The ad reads:*

THE TIME HAS COME

Jesus welcomed women as disciples and friends. He chose women to herald the Good News of His rising.

But centuries of discrimination would pass until the Second Vatican council decreed: With respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language, or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent. (Pastoral Constitution on The Church in the Modern World: 29: Dec. 1995)

With those words, the Roman Catholic Church committed itself to full equality for women as an integral part of the Church's preaching on the universal struggle for human rights and social justice.

Then, in 1971, the World Synod on Justice declared: "action on behalf of justice ... fully appears to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel," (Justice in the World, 6.) The bishops also recognized that "anyone who ventures to speak to people about justice must first be just in their eyes." (Justice in the World, 40)

Therein lays their problem. While we have seen many tangible gains for women in other religious institutions and civil societies, our Roman Catholic leaders have failed to practice what they preach. Yet, in the first sermon of his papacy, Pope Benedict XVI has announced his "determination to continue to put the Second Vatican Council into practice."

We challenge Pope Benedict XVI to act upon his preaching and to restore the credibility of the church. It is time for the leaders of our church to embrace the commitment to justice. It is time to eradicate discrimination based upon sex from the life of the Church.

WE SAY:

- The time has come to affirm the equal rights of women and men in the church.
- The time has come to share decision-making with women and men equally.
- The time has come for our liturgical ministries to reflect the equality we proclaim.
- The time has come for inclusive language, the language of hospitality, to be the norm for our preaching, our liturgy, and church documents. Sexist language is no more acceptable than is racist language.
- The time has come to acknowledge that the Spirit calls women as well as men to ordained ministry.

Catholics Speak Out
 Quixote Center,
 PO Box 5206
 Hyattsville, MD 20712
www.quixote.org



FROM KALAMAZOO

Kim Franke

The Kalamazoo group met at Barb Huber's home prior to the National Meeting. About 12 attended. After the conference, 8 participants met at Kim Franke and Jim Rose's home to share experiences.

A re-organizational meeting will be held at Kim and Jim's on Sunday, Jan. 15th at 1:00 p.m. The group will decide then if and how they want to become a regional member of CTA-MI.

We may want to become the SW Michigan region. RSVP if interested- Kim and Jim at 269-544-2486. All in the neighboring areas are welcome.



FROM SAGINAW

We are busily preparing for a visit from our new Saginaw bishop, Robert Carlson at our January meeting, which he has graciously agreed to attend. We have obtained copies of two NCCB pastoral letters: *The Challenge of Peace* and *Economic Justice for All* to bone up on some of the subject matter we hope to raise at that momentous meeting.

The annual state conference in Detroit was interesting and hopeful to our group as a beginning of an ongoing work for a Synod of the Laity. We're excited to know it's coming, and we intend to work for it in our diocese.

Recently Bishop Carlson appointed a chaplain to the student body of Saginaw Valley State U. We see this as an opportunity to meet with the Catholic students there and present our message of church reform; perhaps interest some in membership in our branch.

Saginaw also is scheduled to host Angela Bonavoglia, author of *Good Catholic Girls*, during her round of Michigan branches. We look forward to hearing her delightful presentation, a message that needs to be spread far and wide.

We are proud of some of our members who are also faithfully demonstrating monthly with the international group: *Women In Black*, who support peace throughout the world. Also, they work with another group, TCAP (Tri-county action for peace) which meets monthly on a busy corner with signs and banners. They report increasing support from the passing traffic with thumbs up and horns tooting accompanied by smiles!



FROM METRO DETROIT

By Eileen Burns

Greetings to all this holiday season. CTA-MI Metro Detroit chapter has been busy prayin' and workin' for peace this year. Local members cooked and served a meal at St. Leo Soup kitchen, and co-sponsored a fund raising event for the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Association (OREPA). A good number of Metro Detroit members joined with hundreds of others in Oak Ridge TN to commemorate the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We took to the streets around Blessed Sacrament Cathedral carrying signs and praying for a more open Church that recognizes the call to ordination for those who receive it. CTA-Metro Detroiters proudly hosted this year's State Conference and will be actively involved in helping set up a Synod of the Lay Faithful. We joined in prayer and creative liturgy at the summer equinox and we entered into the Spirit of Advent with a Mass and potluck at Gerry Sellman's house this month. Our branch hopes to offer other opportunities for creative and meaningful liturgies.

2006 is shaping up.

January 22 at 3:00 - Mary Jean Schoettle of Rochester Hills will host our next meeting. We'll watch and discuss the CTA national keynote address of James Lawson. And we will discuss the pro's and con's of having a northern suburb CTA-MI branch.

February 25 at 9:00 - our 2nd annual visit to St. Leo's soup kitchen. Also, we will be collecting goods for the medical clinic - bandages, diabetes testing strips, alcohol, swabs, etc. I can promise you a good time and an immediate counting of all blessings.

March 19-25 - CTA Metro Detroit is organizing a State-wide speaking tour for Angela Bonavoglia, author of "Good Catholic Girls." Angela's talk will be the kick-off of our local book club discussion group. CTA-Metro Detroit members will meet in small groups and convene twice as an entire group for discussion and prayer.

I will send out a reminder flyer because if you're like me - you've already forgotten what you just read ☺.

Thanks to everyone for your interest and support. Let's continue to grow.

CTA/MI Fall Conference 2005

Arnie's report; other's thoughts are welcome, always!

Ninety persons attended the conference on November 19 and they did not go away disappointed. Sr. Kate Kuenstler (PHJC, JCD) informed, challenged, inspired, and entertained all of us present. In a sentence she enlightened us about the rightful role of Lay Christian Faithful (not laity) in the Church for the 21st century. The 1983 Code of Canon Law includes 28 Canons that address the "rights and responsibilities" of all the Faithful, the People of God. Before the day ended she left no doubt about either, but really opened our eyes to the challenge. In effect, she said the Lay Christian Faithful can no longer be passive listeners to "church authorities", but that they are to "grow-up, become informed, educated and collaborators with the hierarchy". She gave us a year's worth of homework just to become knowledgeable and able to understand the full impact of those 28 Canons. An arduous and exciting task lies ahead to create a Synod of the Lay Christian Faithful. The Conference was a first step.

Consider just a few excerpts from her presentation:

1) "...since the promulgation of the documents of the Second Vatican Council, some 40 years ago, the Church has been LIVING INTO a new theology of Church that calls for a relationship of "communio". As a result of this developing theology, the Code of Canon Law needed to be updated so that its norms would HELP the People of God make visible the image of the church expressed in the documents of Vatican II.

This collegial spirit is the very substance of the laws enacted in the Code of Canon Law, 1983. It is through these norms that it is possible for the People of God to develop into maturity in the life of the ecclesial society." Chew on that for a while. Translation? I'm not a canon law expert, but it seems to me that the new Code was written to SERVE a mature and maturing faithful, not

just to present an updated list of "do's and don't's to be obeyed". Lots of homework in there.

2)" Twenty two years after the Code of Canon law was updated, we are now beginning to understand what role the Lay Christian Faithful have in the life of the Church". This part of the conference raised some 'heat' in the audience as well as spreading 'light'. The hierarchy did not come off well on this point. Dr. Kuenstler suggests that most of the hierarchy are not just unwilling to shed light on these canons, they themselves need to be educated. That helped to reduce the heat a little in the room.

3)"THE ONE MISSION OF THE CHURCH involves the participation of all the Christian Faithful in diverse ways. The People of God enjoy the dignity and freedom of the children of God. Their law is Christ's commandment to love. Their goal is the kingdom of God. Their mission is to be a light for the world". NOW HEAR THIS! The new code lays out a new order or sequence among the People of God as follows: People of God, Christian Faithful, Lay Christian Faithful, Clergy, Religious. Talk about being challenged to new learning!

So much more could be written, but for now lets just say it was a great conference.

Thank you, Dr. Kuenstler/Sr. Kate for your inspiration. Thank you all who participated in the conference. Twenty seven (27) questions, four (4) statements and ten (10) comments were submitted in writing from the breakout sessions.

Thank you all who helped make such an important conference a reality. Cd's and Videos of the entire conference are available. To order please contact Julia Archer. (313-562-2423)



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CTA of MICHIGAN CONFERENCE TAPES

Our videographer has agreed to continue fulfilling orders for tapes of our conference speaker, Sr. Kate Kuentsler. He taped the entire 5 hours, 10 minutes of the conference including the beautiful response by her daughter and step daughter to the Jane Wolford Hughes "In The Spirit" award.

Quickly, so he doesn't put the masters in the dead files, send your requests with check for \$20.00 to Tashi Georgeoff, 3551 Westwood, Dearborn MI 48124. Specify either VHS or DVD. Include your name and address and phone # for verification.