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**<http://ncronline.org/news/sr-theresa-kane-speaks-effective-liturgy-celebration-conference-chicago>**

### **Sr. Theresa Kane speaks on effective liturgy at Conference in Chicago**

Mercy Sr. Theresa Kane was president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in 1979 when she was asked to make a welcoming address to Pope John Paul II during his first visit to the United States. In the address, Kane urged the pope to include “half of humankind” in “all the ministries of the church.”

Mercy Sr. Theresa Kane spoke July 22 in Chicago during the second annual Celebration Conference on Effective Liturgy., “A Knock at Midnight: Celebrating Christ in Urgent Times.” The title of her talk, presented on the Feast of St. Mary of Magdala, was “Woman, Why Are You Weeping?”

... She began her talk with a brief history of the current biblical scholarship to recover the figure of Mary of Magdala from layers of distortion in order to recognize her role as a significant leader in the early church. Sr. Kane praised the organization Future Church, founded in Cleveland in 1997, for its work in assessing the projected impact of the priest shortage and promoting creative approaches to meeting the church’s need for liturgical and pastoral leaders.

Sr. Kane reminded her audience that Mary of Magdala is mentioned prominently in all four Gospels as a companion and disciple of Jesus, one of a group of women who accompanied and supported him in his ministry, were present at his death and burial and the first witnesses to his resurrection. Mary’s status as “the apostle to the apostles” was celebrated in the early church and is still preserved in the Eastern church. But by the fourth century in the West, as part of an official suppression of female leadership, Mary of Magdala was represented in sermons and iconography though a conflation of scriptural passages that identified her primarily as a prostitute and public sinner.

In the second half of her talk, Sr. Kane spoke of the current situation of women in the church and the inspiration to be found in examining the witness of St. Mary of Magdala. An edited version of her remarks follows:

Woman, why are you weeping?

“Let us place ourselves for a moment in the garden where Mary was. This is a woman who has just experienced the torture and most brutal form of death of a very close friend, a death that was indeed an execution, capital punishment, with very few supporters. The disappearance of people after his death and burial was more out of fear that they would be captured and arrested and perhaps tortured.

“But we get the image of Mary of Magdala as someone who was a close, intimate friend, a companion, certainly a benefactor to Jesus, and a disciple. So each of us here, we also weep openly or we weep interiorly at the death of loved one, whether that death be from what we call natural causes or much more traumatic and sudden. But we need to enter into that garden scene, feel the depth of grief, the anguish and

pain at so horrible a death, and we know the relationship that Mary had to Jesus, certainly a close, intimate friend and companion. And at his death, we can conclude that she probably had a conviction that a grave injustice had been done. When one has a clear vision and insight about injustice, one weeps not only with anguish but from anger, with rage. Rage comes from courage, and at any injustice, all of us should be filled with rage.

"The scriptures have said continually, 'God is slow to anger.' God is not without anger. Why does God have a sense of anger? Because of injustice. Why do we have a sense of anger? Because of injustice. So such an emotion is core to righting the wrong, core to bringing about justice. So I feel that her weeping in the garden is certainly because of a great a loss, but also because she was facing of a grave injustice.

"And then the question, what do we do about that?

"Let me speak now of the women of our Catholic community today. Why do we weep?  
...

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**Following the theme of the above article, another prominent woman of the Church speaks. The full text, and references, can be found on The National Catholic Reporter Publishing Company site.**

### **Women priests offer differing approaches to valid ordination**

By Rosemary Radford Ruether

In 2002 seven Roman Catholic women were ordained in Austria on the Danube River by an independent Catholic bishop, Romulo Antonio Braschi. Later unnamed Roman Catholic bishops ordained some of these women priests as bishops. These women bishops, in turn, have been ordaining other women deacons, priests and bishops. From this beginning there has developed a movement, Roman Catholic Womenpriests (RCWP), which presently claims four women bishops and 45 women priests in the United States, as well as others in Europe and Canada. This movement has shaped a thoughtful ecclesiology defining itself both as in valid succession in the Roman Catholic tradition and also as a valid reform that is reclaiming the authentic discipleship of equals of the earliest church based on the redemptive mission of Christ.

Rejecting the papal declaration of May 28, 2008, that the women and the male bishops who originally ordained them are "excommunicated *latae sententiae*" (automatically), RCWP declared that "we will continue to serve our beloved church in a renewed priestly ministry that welcomes all to celebrate the sacraments in inclusive, Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered communities wherever we are called." RCWP claims to stand in "apostolic succession" based on the validity of the episcopal ordination of their founding bishop:

The ordinations of Roman Catholic Womenpriests are valid because of our unbroken line of apostolic succession within the Roman Catholic Church. The principal consecrating Roman Catholic male bishop who ordained our first

women bishops is a bishop with a line of unbroken apostolic succession within the Roman Catholic Church in full communion with the Pope. Therefore, our bishops validly ordain deacons, priests and bishops. Consequently, all qualified candidates, including baptized ministers and priests from other Christian traditions, who are presented to our bishops for ordination are ordained by the laying on of hands into the same line of apostolic succession in the Roman Catholic Church.

Clearly the pope does not agree with this view. For him the women bishops, priests and deacons — as well as the originating bishops — are automatically excommunicated, based on the fact that these ordinations took place against church teaching and without papal approval. Besides this, there is the theological assumption that women by their very nature are incapable of receiving valid ordination as priests in the Roman Catholic Church. (The Vatican mentality toward women was revealed on July 15, 2010, with the release of a document lumping sexual abuse of children by priests and women's ordination as both "very grave crimes.") What then is the concept of "apostolic succession" and "full communion with the pope" that this movement assumes can be unaffected by this profound conflict with papal authority?

Before discussing this issue, let us look at a different approach to valid ordination that has emerged in a faith community in San Diego, Calif., under the leadership of one of the Roman Catholic Womenpriests, Jane Via. Desiring to create and be a part of a vibrant Catholic community that reflected her vision of what such a community should be, Via, a religious educator and lawyer, developed, with the help of ex-priest Rod Stephens, the Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community (MMACC) in 2005.

For some years Nancy Corran, a woman of Protestant background who holds a degree in theology from Oxford and a Master's of Divinity degree from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif., has served with Jane Via and Rod Stephens as a pastoral associate. In 2009 Corran decided that she wanted to become a Catholic in the context of the Mary Magdalene community. The leadership of the Mary Magdalene church decided to call her as a priest to their community. However they decided not to call a bishop from the RCWP movement to come and ordain her, but rather to ordain her as a collective action of their faith community. They based their right to do this on their reading of early church history in which they learned that Christians in the early centuries had called priests and ordained them through the collective action of local faith communities. This ordination of Corran to the diaconate and then to the priesthood by the collective action of MMACC took place July 30 and 31, 2010. Everyone in the community, including the children, laid hands on Corran and signed the official paper as her ordainers.

This decision by MMACC has caused consternation among some in the RCWP movement. Some have even suggested that this action undermines the "apostolic succession" of their movement. By implication the ordination of Corran would be outside of this lineage of "apostolic succession." The emergence of this difference sparks inquiry into the basis of this concept of "apostolic succession" which has become so important for the RCWP movement, and upon which they base the validity of their own ordinations, despite its repudiation by the pope. Why does the leadership of MMACC feel they can disregard this, even though Via was herself ordained in this movement? What does "apostolic succession" as the basis of valid ordination of priests by bishops mean?

This concept of apostolic succession is widely contested. Although claimed by Roman Catholicism, most Protestants, based on historical studies of early Christianity, see this as an historical fiction with little basis in "apostolic" or first century Christianity. In the view of most modern church historians, first and second century Christianity was highly diverse. Christianity manifested itself in several movements that reflected a variety of world views of the time. In many cities of the eastern Mediterranean, such as Alexandria, some of the first Christian groups were Gnostics of various kinds.

According to the gospels, Jesus chose 12 disciples in his life time. After his death, one of them, Judas Iscariot, the traitor of Jesus, was replaced by Matthias by collective action of the remaining 11 disciples (Acts I: 15-26). But these 12 disciples have left little record of evangelizing Gentiles and founding churches around the world. In fact, the original idea of the 12 disciples probably was intended to represent the 12 tribes of Israel, not a group of worldwide founders of churches from which a succession of bishops descended.

The concept of a Gentile church drawn from all nations originated with the evangelizing mission of Paul, himself not a member of Jesus' original disciples, but rather a convert to the Christian movement after Jesus' death. In the story of the spread of Christianity outside Palestine, the names of most of the 12 disciples disappear. The only ones claimed to be related to areas outside Palestine are Peter, associated with Antioch and also with Rome (in death), John in Ephesus, although not as a church founder, and Thomas in India, the last of questionable historicity.

The concept of a monarchical episcopacy; that is, city-based churches headed by a bishop in hierarchical power above elders (presbyters) and deacons, emerged slowly between the late first and early third centuries. Ignatius of Antioch claimed such a monarchical episcopacy for himself in the church of Antioch in letters written in the early 2nd century on his way to martyrdom in Rome, but he makes no mention of Peter as the founding apostle of his church. Irenaeus of Lyons, combating various gnosticisms in his writings *Against the Heresies* in the late second century, expounds the idea of a succession of teachers that guarantee apostolic teaching versus gnostics. For him the church of Rome is the primary example of such a succession of bishop-teachers.

... The notion of the "apostles," that is, the 12 disciples chosen by Jesus, founding churches and inaugurating a succession of monarchical bishops, became formulated in its historical form in the late second and third centuries and appears as a set idea in the *History of the Church* by Eusebius, who wrote successive versions of this work from 305 to 330 AD. For Eusebius, orthodoxy was guaranteed by apostolic succession through the foundation of churches by apostles and the passing down of identical apostolic teaching through their succession of bishops in each church. Eusebius has many references to bishops of various churches from Asia Minor to Italy, but he can only produce continuous lists from apostolic times to his own time for four leading churches: Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch and Rome. He has a few partial lists for other churches, such as Corinth, but does not claim apostolic founders for them.

Careful examination of his lists for the four leading churches raises the question whether any of these were actually founded by one of the 12 apostles. Jerusalem claims as its founding leader, James, the brother of Jesus, who was not a disciple in Jesus' time, but was converted to Christianity after his death. The names of 12 Jewish leaders of this

church "of the circumcision" are claimed from the time of James until the Roman destruction of the city in 139 A.D. when this church disappeared. But it is hard to imagine that this extensive list actually represents a succession of monarchical bishops, rather than names of coexisting leaders. When this church disappeared in 139 A.D., a second list of bishops is claimed for a gentile church in a newly founded Roman city near Jerusalem, but one is puzzled about how this list can be seen as continuing the line from James, Jesus brother.

... Rome, which became the model for the idea of apostolic succession, claims both Peter and Paul as founders. But we know that the church of Rome already existed at the time of Paul's ministry in Greece, when Peter had not been to Rome. Peter may have been martyred there, but did not found the church of Rome and was probably not a leader there, much less a "bishop." So, in each case, the connection of later bishop lists to a supposedly founding apostle fades on examination.

... The idea of apostolic succession as a transmission of Eucharistic power from Jesus and the apostles to bishops is a later idea that emerges slowly to replace the earlier emphasis on a lineage of apostolic teaching. It becomes fully developed only in the 12th century when a concept of priesthood is defined based on the power to "confect" the Eucharist (that is, the power to turn the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ), as the central idea of ordination, excluding earlier ideas of ordination based on installation into various offices. This earlier view of ordination as installation into holding offices allowed various people to be seen as ordained, including women as queens, abbesses and deaconesses.

As ordination came to be linked primarily with priesthood and its ability to "confect" the Eucharist the idea of ordination as installation into an office was eliminated and, with it, the possibility of women being ordained. Only men who share Christ's maleness could inherit this power to do Eucharist, which was supposedly passed down from Christ himself to his twelve apostles and from them to their bishop-descendents. Thus the triumph of a priestly eucharistic concept of ordination, passed down through apostolic succession, is itself an integral part of a process in which women were eliminated as ordainable

Ironically, it is this 12th century concept of apostolic succession as the transmission of the power to do Eucharist which is claimed by the RCWP movement as they lift up the episcopal ordination of their founding bishops as proof of the validity of their own ordinations. This concept of valid ordination, transmitted through the apostolic succession from their founding bishops, works only if one implicitly assumes a mechanistic view of the transmission of this power from one bishop to another. In other words, ordination in apostolic succession is assumed to transmit a kind of spiritual power as a personal "possession" which the ordained persons can dispose of as they wish — apart from agreement with the pope as authorizer in the Roman Catholic Church of who can or should be ordained. ...

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**While the following article may seem more political than spiritual, the implication of this kind of infection for America strikes at our spiritual core. The full article is available at: [http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/the\\_racists\\_return\\_20100811/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/the_racists_return_20100811/)**

## **The Racists Return**

By Joe Conason

Among the most revealing aspects of life during the Obama presidency is the panoply of responses to a black family in the White House. What made so many of us proud of our country on Jan. 20, 2009, has increasingly provoked expressions of hatred from the far right. That is troubling, but not nearly as troubling as the behavior of conservatives who excuse, embolden or simply pretend to ignore the bigots surrounding them.

Last spring, after unruly tea party protesters on Capitol Hill were accused of spewing racial epithets at civil rights hero John Lewis, an African-American congressman from Georgia, conservatives rose up in furious denial. Where was the proof? How could anyone suggest that racial prejudice lurks behind the festering right-wing hatred of President Obama (and his family)? Anger over that episode still lingers in certain quarters, motivating the deceptively edited video attack on Shirley Sherrod and the NAACP by a website called Big Government, Inc.

Even if the alleged assault on Lewis and other black congressmen did occur, argued prominent commentators on the right, it somehow only proved that there is no racism in America worthy of concern. A writer for National Review (the conservative magazine that historically opposed civil rights legislation) confided that the whole subject made him yawn:

"That these things are even remotely newsworthy leads me to one conclusion: Racism in America is dead. We had slavery, then we had Jim Crow-and now we have the occasional public utterance of a bad word. Real racism has been reduced to de minimis levels, while charges of racism seem to increase."

But this summer has seen several loud and ugly outbursts of very real racism-including threats of violence against the president of the United States-that go well beyond the utterance of any single word. As if suffering from a facial tic, leading figures on the right cannot seem to suppress their inner Klansman these days.

Advertisement Is there any other way to explain Glenn Beck's crazed rant comparing the Obama administration to an old movie about a society where apes and chimpanzees dominate humans? What did the Fox News host mean, exactly, when he shrieked: "It's like the damned Planet of the Apes. Nothing makes sense!" Is there any other way to explain the grotesque new best-seller by radio host Laura Ingraham, "The Obama Diaries," where, among other things, she depicts first lady Michelle Obama eating ribs at every meal? Why would she feel the need to describe the president as "uppity" by putting the word in the mouth of his mother-in-law? No wonder Stephen Colbert taunted Ms. Ingraham to her face for "hideous and hackneyed racial stereotyping."

Of course, these are only two of the more egregious instances in recent weeks of social poisoning that dates back well over a year. Symptoms can be seen across the country now, even in amusement parks and church carnivals, where small children are exposed to this spiritual sickness.

At the Big Time fair held by Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Roseto, Pa., last week, a game called "Alien Attack" featured "an image of a suited black man holding a health care bill and wearing a belt buckle with a presidential seal," at which players were encouraged to

aim their popguns. Anybody who hit the cardboard figure in the head or the heart could win a prize. Irvin L. Good Jr., owner of Goodtime Amusements, who is responsible for this disgusting garbage, denied that the figure represents Mr. Obama. "We're not interpreting it as Obama," the inaptly named huckster told a local newspaper. "The name of the game is Alien Leader. If you're offended, that's fine, we duly note that."

Meanwhile on the New Jersey shore, patrons of the Seaside Heights boardwalk could hurl baseballs at a black, jug-eared Obama figurine, winning a prize if they managed to smash it. As seen in a video posted on the Gawker website, this object closely resembles the grinning "lawn jockey" statuettes that used to festoon suburban lawns in a less decent era.

Most conservatives were late in taking responsibility for their movement's immoral opposition to civil rights. It is time for them to step up and denounce the racism that is again disfiguring our country in their name.

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### **Why Sarah Palin Needs To Take Parenting Lessons From Hillary Clinton!**

Need proof that the Secretary of State is an A+ mom? Check out her daughter Chelsea, who DIDN'T get pregnant at 17 or announce her engagement on the cover of a magazine, and who ISN'T shopping a reality show like Bristol Palin.

Isn't it ironic that über-working mom **Hillary Clinton**, who took heat as First Lady because she didn't take her cookie recipes seriously, should be the mom of a Stanford and Oxford University grad, who is getting married on July 31, at the age of 30? She's NOT pregnant! She has a great job at Avenue Capital Group, a hedge fund, and her [husband](#)-to-be is a 32-year-old investment banker -- **Marc Mezvinsky** -- who has NEVER stripped naked for *Playgirl* or any other form of [media](#). Sarah's future son-in-law, 20, on the other hand, after his adventures as a nude model and D-Lister **Kathy Griffin's** date, is currently unemployed but is planning to get his GED and be an electrician.

Furthermore, Chelsea's [wedding](#), which 400 guests are expected to attend, is a personal and PRIVATE affair. In other words, the photos and story are NOT being sold for the cover of *Us Weekly*, unlike **Bristol Palin** and her baby daddy **Levi Johnston's**. ...

This full article is available at:

<http://shine.yahoo.com/channel/parenting/why-sarah-palin-needs-to-take-parenting-lessons-from-hillary-clinton-2078657/?pg=2>

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**I had the opportunity to attend two of the last three meetings of NYC Community Board 1 as it considered this issue. Actually, discussion is a euphemism. For, while proponents of the center generally spoke in a civilized manner, the same cannot be said for those who spoke in opposition.**

**When a 'Ground Zero mosque' really is neither: What a difference two blocks makes**

By Jean Marbella, *The Baltimore Sun*

Even in last week's steamy heat, I got the same chill I always get at Ground Zero. The immensity of the physical and emotional hole left by the 9/11 terrorist attack is hard to imagine from afar — you have to actually be there, looking down into the abyss.

But the other thing that's hard to imagine from afar is how the sanctity of the site has nothing to do with anything around it. Even two blocks away.

That is where the so-called Ground Zero mosque is supposed to be built. So-called because it can no more be considered the "Ground Zero mosque" than, say, the existing New York Dolls Gentlemen's Club one more block away could be considered the "Ground Zero Gentlemen's Club."

From the pitched rhetoric of its opponents, though, you'd think a minaret-topped mosque was going to be built right atop the site of the former World Trade Center.

Instead, Park51, as the proposed building would be called, is envisioned as a community center of about 15 stories which, although it would include a mosque for prayer, would also have a swimming pool, an auditorium and other amenities that make it more akin to a YMCA than a dedicated house of worship. And it wouldn't be built anywhere on Ground Zero itself but two blocks to the north.

I was in New York last week, my first visit since the whole mosque controversy erupted, and happened to walk past Ground Zero. While this wasn't a working trip, I had spent a lot of time in the area previously, having covered 9/11 and its aftermath for *The Baltimore Sun*.

So I can't walk by the site without my own set of memories playing back: the downtown workers and neighbors who saw it all, the planes crashing, the towers exploding and people jumping from impossibly high stories; the desperation of the rescue workers; and, most of all, the heartbreaking experiences of those who waited in vain that day for loved ones to come home.

It is indeed hallowed ground, and no mosque, or any house of worship, belongs there. It should, and will be, the site of a memorial to the dead — who belonged to no one single faith but any number or none of them at all — and new office towers that will restore the site to its former role as part of the living, breathing, working world of Lower Manhattan.

The twin towers of the World Trade Center loomed over nearby neighborhoods and were mostly set apart from them on a vast plaza that interrupted the surrounding street grid. Which is why the proposed site of Park51, while a mere two blocks away from the former plaza's northernmost edge, is really more removed from Ground Zero than you might think.

Part of what makes it seem more distant is simply the scale: On one side of the street, Vesey Street, looms the huge hole in the ground where the 110-story towers fell; on the other, a warren of narrow streets crammed with smaller buildings and storefronts. It is there, on a street called Park Place, where the proposed Muslim center would rise.

While there has been local opposition to the center, there also has been a surprising amount of support, from Mayor Michael Bloomberg, from the community board that represents the Lower Manhattan area and unanimously approved the proposal, even from some of the families of the 9/11 dead. Part of that comes from the fact that the organizers of the center are known quantities in the area — among them, an imam of an existing mosque 12 blocks from Ground Zero and his wife, who have been active participants in interfaith groups and panels devoted to planning the 9/11 memorial and museum.

In fact, as noted in a recent commentary in *The New Yorker* magazine, it's only as you get farther from Ground Zero that opponents begin to outnumber supporters. A poll found, for example, that a greater percentage of Manhattanites than Staten Islanders supported the Muslim center.

Among the loudest voices are two coming from Alaska and Georgia, or wherever it is Sarah Palin and Newt Gingrich are speaking from these days. (Which, come to think of it, is largely in the virtual world, via Twitter or Facebook.)

But here's where the distance thing comes in — the farther away you are, the more Ground Zero is symbol rather than reality.

In New York, it's pretty clear what the boundaries of Ground Zero are — the site is fenced off from the rest of the city. Maybe that's what makes it easier to memorialize 9/11 on one side of the street while carrying on as usual on the other — "usual" in this case being the jumble of a big city in which a Muslim center can be built on the site of a shuttered Burlington Coat Factory store, and, normally, no one would blink.

In fact, if you took everything within several blocks of the former trade center site and considered it part of Ground Zero, you'd have Ground Zero nail salons, Ground Zero fake designer sunglasses stores, Ground Zero places that want to rub your feet and — the reason I was down there last week — the legendary Ground Zero Century 21 discount department store.

None of which disrespects the real Ground Zero.

**It is frightening to think of the type of leader who will appear in America all too ready to exploit this level of intolerance. American men and women have died to protect this freedom. How do we differ from those countries who obstruct freedom of religion?**

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Please send your comments and articles to [tony@tonvercolano.com](mailto:tony@tonvercolano.com)