



Voice of the Faithful™

"Keep the Faith, Change the Church"™

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PRESS RELEASE

CRISIS IN THE CHURCH: A WORKSHOP FOR THE LAITY

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David O'Brien, director emeritus of the Center for Religion, Ethics, and Culture, at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts will give the opening address at 10:45 AM at a conference to be held at Fairfield University on Saturday May 1. Paul Lakeland, chair of the Religious Studies Department, will moderate this session.

The conference "Crisis in the Church: A Workshop for the Laity" is sponsored by members of Fairfield's Religious Studies Department and Voice of the Faithful in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Three survivors of sexual abuse, Landa Mauriello-Vernon, the Connecticut Coordinator of Survivors Network of the those Abused by Priests (SNAP), Michael Powel, and David Cerulli, Manhattan Coordinator of SNAP, will describe their experiences at one PM during a panel on "Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church" moderated by Annette Maiberger and Sheila Rietano of St. Jerome Parish, Norwalk.

David Gibson, journalist and author of *The Coming Catholic Church: How the Faithful are Shaping a New American Catholicism*, and Bruce Russett, Dean Acheson Professor of International Relations at Yale University, and co-editor of *Governance, Accountability, and the Future of the Catholic Church*, will participate in a second panel, "Governance and Accountability in the Church" at 2:30 p.m. Nancy Dallavalle, professor of Religious Studies at Fairfield, will moderate this session.

All sessions will be held in the Oak Room of the Barone Campus Center following 10AM registration. All concerned Catholics are welcome to attend and to bring a brown bag lunch. A donation will be requested.

A mass for healing will be celebrated at 4 p.m. in the University Chapel.

Voice of the Faithful, an organization of mainstream Catholics, seeks "to provide a prayerful voice, attentive to the Spirit, through which the faithful can actively participate in the governance and guidance of the Catholic Church". Its goals are three: to support those who have been abused; to support priests of integrity; and, to shape structural change within the Church.

For directions and further information about VOTF in the Diocese of Bridgeport consult www.votfbpt.org or call 203-847-4145. Information about the national VOTF organization and its current three-part petition developed in response to the recent John Jay College and National Review Board reports on clergy sex abuse is available at www.votf.org.