



EMPOWERING OURSELVES

Flourish & Thrive

Hinsley Hall, Leeds

Friday 30 Aug - Sunday 1 Sept

**root &
branch**



reform
is needed
in our Catholic church!

HYBRID LIVE

**IN-PERSON &
ONLINE**



Root & Branch wish to thank our magnificent speakers who inspire and help us explore how we continue our journey of self-empowerment. We will be looking both externally at the present situation but also inside ourselves to enable us to flourish and thrive. Their input encourages us to think deeply about issues, releasing us from the cage of restrictive dogmas and doctrines, to be free to be that church we wish to see.

R&B offer our warmest thanks for the sponsorship of the Passionist Community, and of MMaC, the Movement for a Married Clergy. Without this support, there would be no EOFT gathering today.

We are also deeply grateful to all our generous individual donors, without whom there would simply be no Root & Branch.



We love to have pictures of our events, but we will indicate where you should sit if you do not particularly wish to be seen. We also ask you not to photograph anyone else without their permission. Thank you!

FRIDAY

Time	Event	Who
15:00 onwards	Welcome to arrive anytime after 15:00 Tea / Coffee available	Root and Branch Core Team
19:00	Evening Meal	Everyone
20:00	Welcome to Empowering Ourselves: Flourish & Thrive Prayer Live, in-person and online	Facilitator: Mary Varley Mike Kerrigan, Sue Bitney, Virginia Saldanha, Kevin Liston, Christina Reymer
20:30 - 20:55	Empowering Ourselves Opening Prayer & Reflections Online	Joan Chittister, OSB
20:55 - 21:30	Empowering Ourselves: Brief Reflection Q&A Live via Zoom Live and online	Dr Mary McAleese
21:30	Relaxation time Bar, tea & coffee available	Everyone
	Both chapels are always open for quiet prayer	

SATURDAY

Time	Event	Who
08:00	Breakfast	
09:15	Welcome, Housekeeping, and Opening Prayer	Facilitator: Mary Ring
09:30 - 11:00	Empowering Ourselves: From the Outside Live, in-person and online	Tony Flannery, CSsR
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee	
11:30 - 13:00	Empowering Ourselves: From the Inside Live, in-person and online	Penny Brown Facilitator: Sue Williamson
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 - 15:30	Flourish & Thrive: Inspirations - Our Stories Live, in-person and online Tea included	Facilitator: Rhiannon Parry Thompson Tony Cassidy CSsR, Rev'd Lisa Loveridge, Angela Hanley, Morag Liebert RCWP, Penelope Middelboe, Vic Camp
15:30 - 16:00	Move to All Hallows Church	
16:00 - 18:00	Open Table: All Are Welcome The Methodist Church "Open Table" tradition and practice All Hallows Church, LS6 1NP Live, in-person and online	Facilitator: Kevin Gallagher Keynote: Rev'd Ruth Gee Rev'd Heston Groenewald, Katharine Salmon, Tony Cassidy CSsR, Rhiannon Parry Thompson, Geoffrey Brome Thompson.
18:00 - 19:00	Return to Hinsley Hall Free Time	
19:00	Evening Meal	
20:00	Relaxation time Bar, tea & coffee available	

Both chapels are always open for quiet prayer

SUNDAY

Time	Event	Who
08:00	Breakfast	
09:00 - 09:30	Please clear rooms. Luggage to storage room or own cars.	
09:30 - 11:30	Where Do We Go From Here? Looking forward: Plenary Session Live, in-person and online Coffee during session	Chair: Penelope Middelboe
11.30 - 11.45	Break	
11:45 - 12:30	Closing Liturgy	Facilitators: Sue Williamson, Katharine Salmon, Pat Brown
12:30	Lunch and Departure	



JOAN CHITTISTER OSB

Needing little introduction and an author of many books, Joan is one of the most influential religious and social leaders of our time. For over 50 years she has passionately advocated peace, human rights, women's issues, monastic and church renewal. A greatly sought-after international speaker, she is also a best-selling author of more than 60 books, hundreds of articles, and an online column for the National Catholic Reporter. We are thrilled and delighted that she opens our gathering with her compelling thoughts on Empowering Ourselves.



MARY McALEESE

Dr Mary McAleese was two term President of Ireland from 1997 to 2011. The theme of her presidency was Building Bridges and working for peace and reconciliation. She is a leading critic of Catholic Church teaching on among other things, women, LGBTQI+, Church members' human rights, children's rights, corporal punishment, church governance and episcopal accountability. Broadcaster and academic lawyer, she has a licentiate and doctorate in Canon Law. We welcome her most warmly to follow Joan's Opening with reflections on the Synod for Synodality and a live Q&A session.



TONY FLANNERY, CSsR

A much-loved Redemptorist priest, Tony wrote about priestly celibacy, women's ordination and same-sex issues from the late 1990s. He co-founded the Association of Catholic Priests to give Irish priests an alternative voice and presence. Then in 2012, the Vatican authorities opaquely and painfully silenced and suspended him from ministry. Courageously, he has turned this last decade into a rich time of study, thought and writing. Tony will have his voice back with us in Leeds and will share with us his views on Empowerment and discuss his recent book "From the Outside."



RUTH GEE

Reverend Ruth is a supernumerary presbyter in Wrexham. A past President of the Methodist Conference, she was Chair of the Methodist Council and Moderator of the Churches Together in England Forum. Currently Ruth serves as Co-Chair of the British Methodist Catholic Dialogue Commission. She has an M.Litt in theology for research into Christian concepts of parenthood and the new reproductive technologies. She will talk with us about the Methodist Church open table tradition and take part in our "Open Table, All are Welcome" celebration at All Hallows Church.



ANGELA HANLEY

Angela is a theologian, communicator and author of several books with a particular interest in the ways exclusion is enacted within Catholicism. Her most recent book 'What happened to Fr Sean Fagan?' tells the story of an Irish moral theologian's brutal treatment by the Vatican. This courageous and compassionate pastor, before he died, asked her to tell the story of how he was censured and silenced by the CDF, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith in Rome.



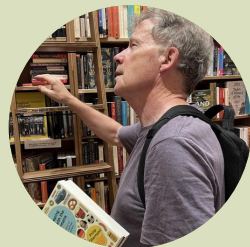
CHRISTINA REYMER

Christina Reymer is a cradle Catholic, and first-generation kiwi, born to Dutch immigrants to New Zealand, who describes herself as a change agent, bringing a global perspective to local issues, with a deep sensitivity for cultural difference. Having worked for five years as a volunteer in Papua New Guinea, and ten years as Director of Mahitahi, the New Zealand Catholic Volunteer agency, she has a particular interest in New Zealand's place in the Pacific. Her current focus is reform of the Catholic Church, particularly in regard to establishing gender equity in leadership and ministry.



GEOFFREY BROME THOMPSON

Geoffrey was brought up in the Presbyterian Church in Belfast. Having been a social worker, he's now a modern languages lecturer and occasional translator, a branch trade union rep, and active in Greener Jobs Alliance. He is a keen student of languages. He will share with us his understanding of the inclusive Presbyterian approach to communion as a means of grace offered to all.



HESTON GROENEWALD

As priest in charge of All Hallows Church in Hyde Park, Leeds, a diverse inner-city parish where his neighbours include three mosques and a mandir, Heston says that he is the "luckiest vicar in the world". Heston invites us to his church on Saturday 31st August, where he will tell us something about All Hallows' values, principles and practices. Through the Open Table celebration which will follow, we will model a church where all are genuinely welcome, not simply in words but in action.



Sr Joan Chittister image on opposite page by Susie Triffitt

KATHARINE SALMON

Katharine studied Languages at Leeds University followed by theology at York St John. She is Head of Religious Studies and in charge of Year 11 at Sheffield High School where she has taught for 24 years. She is a Licensed Lay Minister in the Anglican Church, preaching and leading services. She is discerning a calling with the Immaculate Heart Community, California and, God willing, she says, will be welcomed as a full member this October.



KEVIN LISTON

Kevin Liston, born in Ireland, was ordained a Catholic priest in 1973. He is currently Co-Chair of ACCCR, the Australasian Coalition for Catholic Church Reform. Retired from ministry, and arriving in Australia in 1982, he devoted 30 years to refugee and migrant services, nationally and internationally. Since retiring in 2012, he completed a Master of Theological Studies (ACU) and a Graduate Diploma in Psychology (Monash University). Kevin has a particular interest in ending clericalism and promoting the voice of lay Catholics.



LISA LOVERIDGE

Lisa's service to the Catholic church as a reader, on Parish and Deanery Pastoral Councils and Chair of the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission, ended after agreement to create a sub-group to explore becoming a 'poor parish for the poor' was deleted from the parish council minutes. After many years of spiritual exploration, Lisa trained with OneSpirit as an Interfaith Minister and ordained herself in 2021. As a Pastoral Care Coordinator, she works with older people. Lisa returned to church so that she could be a Eucharistic minister during the pandemic. Whereas she can now pray there peacefully, Lisa retains an uneasy relationship with the Church.



MIKE KERRIGAN

Mike Kerrigan was Chair of the recently disbanded Movement for Married Clergy, which campaigned for almost 50 years for the relaxation of the requirement of celibacy for priests and for the ordination of married men. He is a retired HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools). He left training for the priesthood, perplexed by the total lack of preparation in the seminary for a life of celibacy whilst advising married couples. He now hands on the campaign for a more representative priesthood to R&B.



MORAG LIEBERT

In the 1960s, Morag was delighted that the Church of Scotland began to ordain women. The idea was unthinkable then to the Episcopal, Anglican or Catholic Churches. After a career in nursing and teaching, she obtained a B.D. in Divinity. She was accepted for training by Roman Catholic Women Priests and ordained in 2009, incurring automatic excommunication by Rome. She runs a small House Church, saying, “This is the best that I can do to further the campaign for equality for women and the ordination of women to the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church”.



PENNY BROWN

Penny draws on her mental health practice and her spiritual life as a Catholic, though not aligned to the institutional church, to examine how our feelings, inner authenticity and spiritual growth can be obstructed by institutional Church teachings. The church has much to answer for in putting shame and guilt inside many of us, all of which takes a great deal of effort to understand and resolve. At our event, Penny will explore how these feelings impact our ability to Empower Ourselves.



PENELOPE MIDDELBOE

Penelope was the driving force behind Spirit Unbounded and will tell us about its inception in 2022 as a worldwide platform for reform organisations. With her husband Jon Rosebank, she led the creation of over 115 videos of voices from all parts of the world, set in a context of Human Rights in the Emerging Catholic Church. These astonishingly beautiful stories may be seen on the SU website and form a rich tapestry for thought and discussion. Penelope also enjoys writing a regular column for the Synodal Times and being a grandmother.



RHIANNON PARRY THOMPSON

Rhiannon is a part of Root & Branch and Catholic Women's Ordination core teams. She works in adult and higher education, embedding sustainability into her practice. She is a member of Catholic Concern for Animals. Committed to ecumenical and interfaith relations, she is the Catholic Church representative on her local Christian Aid Committee. She will talk about the challenges to the Church's practice of withholding the Eucharist, “the source of life” from some of the faithful.



SUE BITNEY

Sue Bitney has been part of R&B almost since our inception, from Minnesota, USA. She has supported us through thick and thin, and joins us, despite the time difference, at almost all our events. She has experienced highly destructive power abuse within the institutional Church, but used it to obtain a Masters in Adlerian Psychology and to help other victims. She also works in end of life care, and says, "My hospice work has shown me that heaven and earth are together and that the communion of saints is here."

TONY CASSIDY, CSsR

Another well-loved Redemptorist priest, Tony studied theology at the University of Kent at Canterbury in a nondenominational course. After ordination, he studied Scripture at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, and later taught for 14 years at the Franciscan Study Centre in Canterbury. Recently in charge of a parish in South London, where his focus was on parochial self-empowerment, he was suddenly removed following false accusations. Now in Liverpool, his teachings are being well received.

VIC CAMP

Vic will launch Root & Branch's Spirit Unbounded Treasury, an easy-access course to their 115+ videos for parishes across the world. The initial 8 sessions allow individuals, small groups or parishes to understand some of the crucial questions facing Catholics globally, most especially with regard to Human Rights in the Catholic institution. Vic says "I feel blessed to be on this journey".

VIRGINIA SALDANHA

Virginia Saldanha is a noted writer and public speaker on how the Small Christian Community is a unit of a Synodal Church. She has occupied high-level roles with Laity, Family and Women in the ArchDiocese of Bombay, on Pax Christi International, and with the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India. She began engaging with the issue of sex abuse in the Church in 1998; this initiative expanded to include women across India and now internationally with ECA (Ending Clergy Abuse). She is a founder member of the Indian Women Theologians Forum.



NOTES



NOTES

Our Core team are all volunteers, but it is you who help us keep the show on the road; the videos, zooming, website and editing processes, as well as the costs of setting up this far-reaching event. Every donation helps:

www.rootandbranchsynod.org/donate

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Thank you so much ♥



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