



A MATTER of SPIRIT

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The “Me Too” Movement

The “Me Too” campaign was started in 2006 by activist Tarana Burke to shed light on the widespread issue of sexual assault. Following the fallout surrounding high-profile Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, women took to social media to share their stories with the “hashtag” #MeToo.

“Hashtags” are used on media sites as a way to identify a word or a phrase on a specific topic using the hash (#) symbol. Oftentimes, certain topics will “trend” on social media, identified by a hashtag, meaning that many people are writing about the issue at one time. This “Me Too” moment has invigorated survivors to share their stories and hold perpetrators accountable on and off of social media.

In this issue of *A Matter of Spirit*, we seek to highlight the importance of this moment, in hopes that it will spark lasting structural change. Theresa Earenfight explains how “Me Too” challenges systems of patriarchy, Jennifer Tilghman-Havens offers wisdom into how to parent in the age of “Me Too,” Emily Cohen speaks to the “Church Too” movement, and how survivors are speaking out against sexual abuse in religious institutions.

We also hear stories and poetry from women who share their experiences with sexual harassment and assault and what the “Me Too” movement means to them. Vince Herberholt and Kelly Hickman offer ways for women and men to engage one another about patriarchy, sexual harassment and assault through dialogue. Finally, Susan Rose Francois, CSJP gives voice to the many women who have been inspired to run for public office.

Join us as we learn and reflect on our place in the “Me Too” movement, as women and men of all generations, together.

The Me Too Movement What took so long?

By Theresa Earenfight

The #MeToo movement has unleashed a long pent-up torrent of anger at the treatment of women by men in power. Women are not the only ones crying out. The presence of women in the workplace reveals a complex intersection of patriarchy, which privileges men over women, with issues of race, ethnicity, religion, social class, and cultural heritage. This means that anyone in a vulnerable position relative to men—the list is long and it includes people of color, immigrants, anyone not identifying as a heterosexual male—has long known the harsh fact that workplace harassment is rampant. The #MeToo movement began in 2006 as an online space to support women

and, as is well known now, gained momentum in the fall of 2017 as accusations of sexual harassment of women in Hollywood avalanched and spread.

The question I asked as this all unfolded was, what took so long? Yes, patriarchy has deep roots in worldwide societies, extending into the pre-historic past. But this is 2018. Aren't we more advanced than our ancestors?

It seems we are not. Patriarchy is a tenacious and powerful social fact. It can silence women, question their truthfulness, use the law against them instead of to protect them, and then shame them into submission. Patriarchal laws are powerful because they have become deeply embedded in widely held cultural attitudes that regard women as objects rather than full humans with



Take Back the Night March at New Mexico State University-Alamogordo

legal rights. It can be detected in rape laws that until the 1980s still influenced the modern Anglo-American legal tradition. Think about that for a moment: laws enacted in the 12th century encoded that one woman's testimony was not enough to stand up in a court of law. Other testimony was needed to confirm her account, where one man's voice was legally sufficient.

This has shaped cultural notions about a woman's legal ability to consent and at what age a female body was legally adult. It took 700 years for rape laws in the United States to recognize a woman as a legally competent truthful witness to a crime against her. Worse, medieval law treated women as the legal property of a father, husband, brother, or uncle. This may not technically be the case now, but in some cultures, an attitude prevails that a woman's rape is a crime against the men in the family, that a woman is responsible for something she did not do, but that was done to her. Consider, for example, that some religiously conservative groups carefully guard women's sexuality until marriage but blame her should she be the victim of a rape. Women are shamed for something they did not do, they can be forced to marry the perpetrator, and in some widely reported cases, the victim is maimed or killed to hide the family's shame of what they perceive to be an unclean woman. This is doubly repressive. First, it denies a woman personal agency and then it shames her for actions beyond her control.

Compounding this injustice is the cultural silencing of women. For most of history, women's voices have been drowned out by men's. History was written by men, about men. Women were noted only when they were too powerful to ignore, when a queen ruled or a saint performed miracles, or so troublesome that they were needed to serve as an example, as in accusations of witchcraft. Women who spoke up or spoke out were insulted as gossips. Women's voices were limited to private

spaces. Crimes against women were open secrets, covered up and shameful. Women were not trusted and so grew to not trust themselves, and their doubt and uncertainty of what happened still haunts them and is exacerbated by the pervasive non-disclosure agreement. That euphemism—"non-disclosure"—is covert legal-speak for "Shut up or else."

Patriarchal power is persistent, legal, military, religious, cultural, and political but it is not eternal. There is tremendous power in crowds of people with a good idea. Women used that power in the 1960s to advance important legislation that opened the workplace to ev-

"...to get beyond the #MeToo to a movement that really enacts meaningful and enduring change, we need to change the system."

eryone, mandated equal pay for equal work, rewrote rape law, and opened the doors of universities, the military, sports, and in a few cases, religious institutions. The backlash to all this freedom for women was quick, nasty, and powerful. Too many men, faced with civil rights legislation that curtailed white supremacy and women side-by-side with them in workforce, feared of loss of manliness and lashed out, acted out, and took out their frustration on the bodies of female co-workers.

What #MeToo has shown so clearly is how much work remains. But it is not hopeless. Power does not reside in men alone, and especially not in any one man. Women are vulnerable, but not powerless. We are not without agency. Factors such as race, class, eth-

nicity, and physical ability complicate that power and agency and make some women more vulnerable than others, and that means we must use the power of numbers and raise our voices without fear or shame.

We need to stop speaking in circumlocutions, half-truths, and outright lies. We need to stop calling men who touch women inappropriately habitual boundary-crossers and boys-who-will-be-boys. We need to call them law-breakers. In a unanimous decision in 1986, the Supreme Court determined that sexual harassment of an employee by a supervisor violates the Federal law against sex discrimination in the workplace. Sexual harassment that is deemed "sufficiently severe or pervasive" to create "a hostile or abusive work environment" is a violation of the law. Harassment becomes unlawful where enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or when the

conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. Although an individual can sue after being sexually harassed, sexual harassment is not a crime. But, if it involves unwanted touching, physical intimidation, or even some extreme forms of coercion, it can quickly turn into sexual assault, which is a serious crime.

Yet it took thirty years, marked by an ugly Senate confirmation hearing for Clarence Thomas which made Anita Hill a public figure, for that mandate to be made public, painful enough for perpetrators to maybe, just maybe, have a lasting effect in the workplace. But women added up the costs of bringing crimes to light, the public flogging for



simply speaking the truth, and many retreated into silence or took comfort with other victims.

We need to stop thinking of this as simply the act of one man. It is systemic, embedded in the laws that guide how we live our lives. We need laws to create rules and enforce consequences.

We need to stop thinking about sexual harassment in schools and in the workplace as nothing more than sexual desire or an emotional expression. Sexual harassment is about a desire to dominate, subjugate, humiliate, silence, and ultimately disempower another human being. This is not sexy. Being sexy is not a workplace skill. It is not part of the job description. Sexual harassment is not affectionate. It is about sovereignty over another human being, about using another person's body as a place to act out fantasies of power. It is raw, it is ugly, and it is widespread.

Agency and power begin when women reclaim, again, the sovereignty of their bodies. This was the basis of the "Take Back the Night" movement that began in the 1970s. Reclaim the streets and we can reclaim the workplace.

We like to think that it is possible to fix the problem one man at a time. We can have classes on masculinity, teach parents how to raise a boy who's not a bully, and have classes on sexual consent for schoolkids. It's also possible to empower women one at a time. We need to freeze when a man touches us without our consent. We need to call it out, immediately and loudly. We can rally our supporters. We can slip away. We can quietly tell other women not to get near that guy, not to work with that man, not to go to lunch alone, not to do a million things just to get through the day.

But to make this really work, to

get beyond the #MeToo moment to a movement that really enacts meaningful and enduring change, we need to change the system. We need to enact laws with teeth, laws that hurt, laws that cost economically. We need to enforce those laws. To do this, we need to elect people to public office who do not assume boys will be boys, who are not content to enact tepid legislation just because some political compromise is called for. We need to be sure the victim's voice is given equal weight to the accused.

Sexual harassment is not just a woman's issue. It is a human rights issue.

▲ *Theresa Earenfight is Professor of History at Seattle University where she directs the Department of Women and Gender Studies. Her research and teaching focus on women and power, particularly elite and royal women in the European Middle Ages.*

Parenting in the Age of "Me Too"

By Jennifer Tilghman-Havens

As our family marched in the Women's March this past January, my four-year-old daughter proudly displayed a hand-written sign, complete with backwards letters and misspellings, that read "Annie for President 2056!" Her cowgirl boots clapping the pavement alongside the energized feet of thousands of marchers, she raised that sign high, smiling at the many strangers who were uplifted by her confidence and spirit. It wasn't just her buoyancy that drew them to her—it was the hope that one day a woman will claim the highest role within our nation and lead it with the grace, authenticity and competence it deserves. Just as important to me as my daughter's aspiration is my son's response to her declaration of candidacy. When he saw the sign, he exclaimed, "it's the beginning

of her campaign!" and we brainstormed together what he might do as her campaign manager. All of our girls deserve no less than for everyone around them to cheer them on toward the leadership that our organizations, our churches and governments so desperately need, and for the men in women's lives to offer their enthusiasm and support.

Many of us find ourselves craving inspiration to envision new, hopeful and just possibilities for our collective future. But an important spiritual step in moving toward our desired goal is recognizing hurts and wounds that remain raw until named and healed. The #BlackLivesMatter movement calls us in a powerful way to be accountable for the truth of the brutality inflicted against black and brown bodies, past and present. The movement's role in advancing our current racial justice efforts is central.

The #MeToo movement represents a similar cultural reckoning with previously dismissed truths about the widespread violence against women's bodies and spirits. Women have joined together in solidarity to honor the painful experiences of one another, and men have been reawakened to their responsibility to validate women's experiences and to claim their own responsibility as "#MenToo", who must call out oppression inflicted by other men and redefine masculinity. Truth-telling and accountability sets a necessary foundation for collapsing power differentials and honoring the gifts of women and people of color as leaders, shapers of policy and voices for change.

What does this important cultural moment mean for parents? It is an immense responsibility to parent in these times. I am confident that for my parents (and for their parents before

them), parenting was not easy. But the challenges of parenting in 2018 make many parents with whom I speak feel overwhelmed most of the time. The lives of working parents are as demanding as ever, and the complexity of the issues facing our children in a digital age raise many new questions, alongside the very difficult realities of racism and white supremacy, the fear of people who are undocumented and those who love them, the realities of climate change, and a national and ecclesial narrative that continually re-inscribes male dominance. It's no wonder today's parents feel overwhelmed! There are many wonderful parenting resources that speak intelligently to the complexity of these issues in a deeper way than

is possible here. What I'd like to offer are three practices from the Jesuit and Catholic tradition that foster respect and support, and that tether the family unit together as a source of honesty, love, accountability and belonging amidst turbulent times.

Check in with each other regularly. The Ignatian Examen, a practice encouraged by St. Ignatius 500 years ago, offers a family-friendly structure for creating space to connect and share honestly our experiences together. Each family member shares the "roses, thorns and buds" from their days, echoing Ignatius's call to review the day for consolations and desolations, as well as to name a hope or intention for tomorrow. The space to name both the "roses" and the "thorns" makes it possible to be grateful for the goodness in our days, but also to be authentic about challenges, confusion, loneliness, or loss, helping children know that all of these feelings and experiences "belong" at the family table or at the bedtime tuck-in. Social researcher and author Brene Brown says "feeling vulnerable, imperfect, and afraid is human. It's when we lose our capacity to hold space for these struggles that we become dangerous." When family members can bring our most authentic or broken selves to each other and to a loving God who accompanies us, we can create space to honor our own lived experience and to respect the lived experience of another.

Decide where you "stand" as a family. St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises includes a "Meditation on the Two Standards," an invitation to reflect on where one stands before Christ. It invites the participant to notice his/her values and where they are not in alignment with the teachings of Jesus. The #MeToo movement may inspire families to consider the foundational values that serve as standards for how they treat others. A couple of years ago, we sat down together and developed a list of "Tilghman-Havens Family Values." We posted

them on our wall and they remind us, in our dozens of daily trips through the kitchen, what we stand for and to what we hold each other in loving accountability. The list includes: "caring for our bodies, minds and spirits," "hospitality and generosity," "learning and growing," "honoring the earth," and "expressing feelings." Every few months, we put them in the center of our table

"But the challenges of parenting in 2018 make many parents with whom I speak feel overwhelmed most of the time."

and decide what to add or where we've forgotten to live that value fully. "Expressing feelings" calls us to listen fully to one another and to remind one another when behavior transgresses a boundary. We are especially insistent that our boy listens to his sister's voice and respects her space and her body, and we encourage her to express her needs and desires. These "standards" can also help a family decide what is or is not aligned with various media that children encounter. When the lyrics of a current pop song referred to women as "hot," my husband and I talked with our son about how this term makes girls and women into objects, therefore not honoring their bodies, minds or spirits. A family's guiding principles serve as a guide for how they encounter the world.

Strive toward justice within family roles. The rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching, which honors human dignity and justice, can inform family roles. The division of family responsibilities sets gender expectations and can either constrain or free family members from unequal roles. Research on women and negotiation has found that one source of the unjust gender wage gap is the very earliest division and compensation of labor within the home for boys and girls. Girls often are tasked with the "daily" chores which go largely unnoticed and uncompensat-

Jennifer Tilghman-Havens with her children, Annie and Joey, at the Women's March



ed. Boys take on discreet projects like lawn-mowing or snow-shoveling, for which they earn payment. Girls learn at an early age that they are meant to be “of service,” while boys associate work with compensation. For two years now, our ten-year old son has been in charge of the family’s laundry. Despite one or two shrunken wool sweaters and the occasional resistance to the mounds of folding, he has taken this on as a source of pride and has even shown his friends how to work the washer and dryer!

While we can have influence over our norms at home, what my daughter and son learn about gender roles by attending church each Sunday gives me pause. I am deeply heartened by the recent commitment of the Episcopal Church to commit to inclusive lan-

guage for God, and I pray that the language and leadership within Catholic churches can evolve as women’s voices and truths are acknowledged as sacred. My daughter trusts that she can be this country’s president one day if she sets her mind to it. I entrust to the Holy Spirit my hope that perhaps women’s gifts as preachers, leaders, and ministers can be fully received and celebrated by her own Catholic community as well.

▲ *Jennifer Tilghman-Havens is a teacher, writer, facilitator, and spiritual director at the Center for Jesuit Education at Seattle University, and the creator of the “Parenting in an Ignatian Spirit” group through the Ignatian Spirituality Center. She is humbled and inspired daily by her supportive partner and two children.*

Church Too

By Emily Cohen

I recently spoke with a woman who was sexually abused by her faith leader twenty years ago. He created for her a universe of theological confusion, manipulation, and harm. Courageously, she decided to file a report about the abuse not long after. Upon doing so, she was ostracized, shunned, and made out to be a hysterical trouble-maker. She was pushed out of the church and was tasked with finding justice and healing elsewhere. In an unrelated and more recent case, a young woman told me that her spiritual director, an ordained priest, started making sexual comments to her and telling her that he was the only one who could help her. He used their sessions to harass her and justified his behavior with spiritual language. Yet another woman who was being abused by her boyfriend sought help from her pastor. He told her to ask God to forgive her for whatever part

she was playing in causing the abuse.

These are just three of the many stories that have been spoken to me since the widespread exposure of abuse by high-profile leaders across many industries—actors, directors, doctors, politicians, teachers, and, yes, *clergy*—has captured headline after headline across the country. In my work to address gender-based violence in faith communities, I am familiar with these kinds of stories. But recent news and political activism has encouraged and given space for more women to come forward and speak the truth of their experiences.

Shortly following Harvey Weinstein’s fall from Hollywood grace, actress Alyssa Milano ignited the #MeToo wildfire on Twitter, encouraging anyone who had experienced sexual harassment or sexual abuse to use the hashtag like a



virtual hand-raising. Overnight, the #MeToo’s were in the hundreds of thousands. Stories of harassment, assault and rape were shared. For many, it was the first time they spoke in a public way about the abuse they experienced. “It feels amazing to know I’m not alone,” reads one tweet.

The “Me Too” campaign was first started in 2006 by longtime New York-based black activist Tarana Burke to shed light on the magnitude of sexual abuse and to connect survivors—especially young women of color—to one another. In an interview following Burke’s being named one of The Silence

Parenting Resources

Parenting for Racial Justice

☞ raceconscious.org

☞ embracerace.org

Parenting, General

☞ [Parenting for Peace & Justice ipjc.org/publications](http://ParentingforPeace&Justiceipjc.org/publications)

☞ laurakastnerphd.com

☞ ignatiansolidarity.net/just-parenting

Parenting and Climate Change

☞ parentmap.com/article/climate-change-kids-parenting-advice

Breakers—*TIME* magazine’s Person of the Year—Burke says, “This is just the start. I’ve been saying from the beginning it’s not just a moment, it’s a movement. Now the work really begins.” Churches and people of faith are taking note and participating in their own way.

On the heels of the popularization of #MeToo, Emily Joy and Hannah Paasch, two friends who met at Moody Bible Institute, launched #ChurchToo. Joy was groomed and abused by a youth pastor in her church when she was 16 and Paasch was pushing against and trying to unlearn evangelical purity



culture. The hashtag was a way to create space for survivors to tell their stories of abuse by religious leaders. Like #MeToo, #ChurchToo spread quickly across the internet and by the next day, thousands of women shared their experiences of abuse by pastors, youth camp leaders, priests, small group leaders, and church staff. Although the hashtag was started in an evangelical context, the survivors coming forward spanned many traditions and denominations, including Catholicism. So much for the oft-quoted assurance, “It doesn’t happen here.”

#ChurchToo is providing in a public way a lesson in the similarities and differences of abuse in religious settings as opposed to non-religious settings. On the one hand, churches are no different than other institutions in their ability to facilitate, cover up, or minimize abuse by their members. On the other hand, abuse by a religious leader causes a remarkable and specific wound that is often deeply spiritual—a result of the betrayal of sacred trust. In this way, #ChurchToo is distinct from #MeToo in that it is inherently a calling-out of the hypocrisy of churches and leaders who profess Christian faith and commitments while proceeding to abuse, manipulate, and harm people they are supposed to care for and protect.

Perpetrators of abuse use whatever tools they have at their disposal to gain power and control over their victims. In religious settings, those tools can be things such as sacraments, prayer, religious authority, or sacred space. The 2017 Netflix mini-series *The Keepers* demonstrates this well, in highlighting the stories of survivors of abuse at a Catholic high school in Baltimore, Maryland. One woman, Jean Hargadon Wehner, was abused by Father Neil Magnus after the sacrament of confession, when she told the him that she had been abused by a male relative.

Magnus told Jean that she could not be cleansed of these sins unless he helped her. He and the school’s chaplain, Father Joseph Maskell, sexually abused her repeatedly. The stories in *The Keepers* are heinous and painful to hear, but they also represent common tactics of abuse used by people in positions of trust across all religious traditions.

The history of mishandling sexual abuse in the Catholic Church has caused immense suffering. Certainly, the institutional, pastoral, and theological failures are legion. In the decades since news broke of the magnitude and scope of the sexual abuse crisis, survivors and activists have been steadfast in their work to support one another in naming the abuse, holding perpetrators accountable for their actions, and working toward healing and justice for survivors. Important strides have been made in terms of mandatory reporting requirements and the implementation of policies and procedures to protect children. Organizations like FaithTrust Institute, founded in 1977 by Marie Fortune, continue to equip communities with the tools and knowledge they need to prevent and respond to abuse. The multitude of resources and expertise now available means

that faith communities have both the capacity and the responsibility to do something. And there is much work to be done.

Churches can begin by educating themselves about abuse. Invite experts in from your local community to offer a training on the dynamics of abuse and how to respond. This is especially important for clergy, pastoral counselors, church staff, and spiritual directors. Build relationships with local service providers so that appropriate and timely referrals can be made. Believe people when they tell you about abuse. Be willing to examine church teaching, theological traditions, or cultural norms that can contribute to gender-

“What is on display right now is more than a multitude of horrific stories. This is a call to action.”

Sexual Abuse Resources

- ✂ **FaithTrust Institute:**
faithtrustinstitute.org
- ✂ **Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN):**
rainn.org
- ✂ **Nicole Sotelo, Women Healing from Abuse: Meditations for Finding Peace** (Paulist Press, 2006)
- ✂ **Marie Fortune, Is Nothing Sacred** (United Church Press, 1999) and **Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse** (HarperOne, 1995)

A Lament for our Times

based violence and exacerbate a victim's suffering. These are just some of the ways we can begin to move our communities in the direction of dignity, compassion, and integrity.

What is on display right now is more than a multitude of horrific stories. This is a call to action. It is about the resiliency of survivors and the discovery of the parts of our religious traditions and spiritual practices that provide healing and give us models for standing with those who suffer and holding accountable those who cause harm. Religion and spirituality can be a resource or a roadblock in a survivor's healing and recovery. There are deep wells of healing resources in all of our traditions. Sometimes, after abuse, it can take a long time to discover these resources or feel ready to engage with any part of a religious tradition. There is not one "right way" to heal and everyone takes the time they take. May each of us, in whatever way we can, join this movement for change and create communities worthy of our trust. To all survivors: I believe you.

▲ **Emily Cohen, M.Div.** is a Program Manager at FaithTrust Institute, a national multifaith organization providing training and education to faith-based and community organizations on the topics of domestic violence, sexual assault, and clergy misconduct. Emily is a graduate of Seattle University and Harvard Divinity School.

By Peg Borkowski

O Lord our God
While your grace and beauty
surrounds us through time
and across every nation and culture,
Why, O Lord, do we suffer so?
From narrow minds; vicious thoughts;
hierarchical higher ground
and problems of poverty and privilege?
Why do some prosper while others
feel abused or forgotten?
Why, O Lord? Why?

Why do we categorize; prioritize; judge
worthiness and unworthiness
as if we took part in your act of Creation?
Why are we blind to the
rage; racism; and rape
that dominates our daily news?
Why, O Lord? Why?

Our foes have battered us with
blows of invisibility;
inequality; cruelty;
harassment; and abuse.
Our tears flow like rivers
toward fertile ground,
yet in the barren desert of singularity
We have found strength in our voice
to collectively cry "Me Too."

In pervasive pain, at the gallows of grief,
we claim together "Time's Up."
When one indiscretion invites another;
when heedless, mindless actions hurt,
we cry to you, O Lord, for
protection and strength.

Protect us, O Lord,
and let our foes know we
will be silent no longer.
No longer will agreements
further dehumanize us
as we have wept at the pressure
to sign away our voices
Bringing safety for those
who hold the papers
and never forgotten pain for
those who hold the pen.

Protect us, O Lord, we cry
"Me Too" and in solidarity
claim "Time's Up!"

When, O Lord, will we see
through your eyes?
and look upon color as beauty;
diversity as gift?
When, O Lord, will we fill our minds
with enough understanding
to demand equality and safety
for all races, genders, cultures
and communities?

Protect us, O Lord, we cry
"Me Too" and in solidarity
claim "Time's Up!"

Fraught with discrimination; tangled in
economic injustice;
bound by insecurities and small-
mindedness;
rattled by rape and privilege that
poisons,
we cry out to you,
Protect us, O Lord, and heal us.

Flood each household with
the waters of Siloam
to heal our blindness.
Open our eyes and minds to your vision
of humanity created in your image:
Male and female; gay and straight; young
and old; small and large;
in a rainbow of shades that sings the
glory of the human person, fully alive.

Protect us O Lord, and heal us.
And, please, can it be "Times
Up" for our Church, too?

▲ **Peg Borkowski** is a retired Pastoral Associate who worked in Seattle parishes for 25 years. She holds an M.Div from Seattle University and a D.Min from San Francisco Theological Seminary. Her particular joys in parish work included preaching, leading retreats, and facilitating the process of bringing inquirers to the faith. Peg and her husband have four adult sons.

My “Me Too” Spreadsheets

By Mary Mele

Spreadsheets give me a sense of control. I use them to record money, exercise, books and other things. Recently, I made a spreadsheet of times I'd been sexually abused. I have always known and named a single incident of sexual abuse by a stranger when I was ten. I told my mother immediately and over the years we would process what that was about.

The “Me too” discussions sparked memories of events I had not shared. These events were more confusing, some mixed in with exploring my own sexuality and some involving trust of those in authority. One by one, I started rethinking these memories.

In my sexual abuse spreadsheet, I listed in columns my age, what I knew about the aggressor, what the incident involved and what I did about it.

There were originally 10 instances, but once I started, more came to mind and at the moment there are 17 on the list. I noticed there were 3 incidents in which I was confused and possibly gave the wrong signals initially. My confusion felt shameful but more noteworthy, this shame seeped into other less



ambiguous incidents. Because there can be blurred lines, I took all of the “fault” onto myself.

I looked at this spreadsheet and thought “This was not my fault. I have no reason to be ashamed. This was aggressive behavior aimed at me, transgressive behavior which deliberately cut me out of the crowd.”

I discussed this with an older neighbor who said, “Oh, I’ve never had an incident.” NEVER? “Well... this happened to me in the doctor’s office. Do you think this counts?” The next day

my neighbor said, “I’ve been thinking. I remember another incident.” This second time, she didn’t need me to verify the abuse.

Women are remembering. We’re listening, we’re talking and we’re confirming for each other that our privacy and our persons have been abused in a wide variety of situations. What will come of this awareness?

▲ *Mary Helene Mele lives in Bellingham, WA with her husband, where she recently retired from teaching spreadsheets at the local community college.*

I’m Angry Too

By Maghan Molloy Jackson

As a woman who has been grinded against on trains, masturbated to in parks, catcalled while leaving the grocery store and walking the dog and taking out the trash, my

response to #MeToo has been one of pained recognition and unsurprise. Of course, #MeToo. Of course.

My reaction has been one of fierce satisfaction, watching men who have abused their power, who have caused so much pain, finally get even a fraction of

the justice their victims are owed. I have been furious and frustrated, knowing that for years, decades, centuries, men like Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey and Donald Trump have been protected by the systems of patriarchy that are designed to silence dissent, to sow disbelief and skepticism on behalf of the powerful, to keep marginalized voices and people always, inexorably, silent and on the margins. I have been afraid, knowing that bisexual women like

myself experience sexual violence at a rate twice as high as straight women and lesbians¹. I have been ashamed, seeing ever more clearly that I benefit from a system of white supremacy that protects me from violences that are visited upon women of color, both trans and cis, with a regularity that makes even the collective outcry of #MeToo seem woefully inadequate. I have been resentful of the fact that, once again, it falls to women and our allies to take up the thankless emotional labor of trying to build a world that doesn't operate on misogyny, only to be met with disbelief and dismissal from those whom these oppressive systems benefit.

I have been angry. I *am* angry. I don't plan to stop being angry any time soon.

But I have seen enough, in the past year, to make me just the tiniest bit hopeful, too. I have marched with folks of every gender, orientation and race against the increasing threat of extremism. I have borne witness to people who have so long been silent out of fear raise their voices and tell their stories, certain for the first time that someone is listening. I have witnessed the ruination of predators, but I have also seen them protected with ever-increasing furor by those whose supremacy is threatened by our refusal to be quiet any longer.

My feelings in response to #MeToo and its ongoing aftermath are too complicated to easily parse, but I become more convinced every day that if there is ever to be a real, lasting swing toward justice in the long arc of history, then our fight is just beginning. Our cry must only get louder. #MeToo

▲ **Maghan Molloy Jackson** is a PhD student in Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies at The Ohio State University. Her work considers possibilities of representation for women and queer folks in popular media, particularly through the lens of transformative fan production. Originally from Montana, she now lives in Columbus, Ohio with an ever-growing collection of second-hand books and a supercilious beagle named Penelope.

¹ Walters, M.L., Chen J., & Breiding, M.J. (2013). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

¡Basta, basta, basta!

By Paula Zambrano

Llegamos a los campos
a empezar nuestro trabajo
no falta quien nos diga:
Qué buen trasero tienes
ya ponte a trabajar

¡Basta, basta, basta!
Algunos mayordomos
te quieren conquistar
ofreciéndote más horas
si te dejas manosear
Te dicen cuánto cobras
esperan que contestes
para poderse aprovechar

¡Basta, basta, basta!
Nosotras sólo queremos
que nos dejen trabajar
Queremos respeto
Y también igualdad
Nacieron de una mujer,
¿por qué nos tratan mal?

¡Basta, basta, basta!
Nos sentimos acorraladas
por estos compañeros
por estos mayordomos
que sólo abusan su poder
y autoridad

¡Basta, basta, basta!
A veces quiero renunciar
pero tengo una familia
que debo alimentar
Te hostigan constantemente
ya me cansé de aguantar
Esas miradas me hacen sentir mal

¡Basta, basta, basta!
Nos amenazan si hablamos
Nos quieren controlar
Nos acusan que venimos
sólo para coquetear

¡Basta, basta, basta!
Debemos hablar y denunciar
para poderlo parar
Merecemos respeto
y también igualdad

We arrive in the fields
To start working
There's always someone saying:
What a great butt you have
Now get to work!

Enough, enough, enough!
Some of the managers
Want to score with us
They offer more hours
If they can fondle us
They ask how much we charge
They wait for our answer
To take advantage of us

Enough, enough, enough!
We only want
To be allowed to work
We want respect
And fair treatment
They were born from a woman
Why do they treat us badly?

Enough, enough, enough!
We feel as if there is no escape
From these coworkers
From these managers
Who abuse their power
and authority

Enough, enough, enough!
Sometimes I want to quit
But I have a family
That I need to provide for
They are relentless
I am tired of suffering
Their stares make me sick

Enough, enough, enough!
We are threatened if we speak
They want to control us
We are accused of
coming to work just to flirt

Enough, enough, enough!
We must speak up
to stop this
We deserve respect
And also equal treatment

▲ **Paula Zambrano** is the Co-Chair of the Farmworker Empowerment Committee for the WA Coalition to Eliminate Farmworker Sexual Harassment.

Where do we begin?

Below are two perspectives about how to encounter one another in the time of the “Me Too” movement. We encourage you to consider dialogue as an important next step. The Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center provides a general dialogue process called *Contemplative Dialogue Circles*, a tool for deep listening in challenging times. For more information and to order a copy of the facilitator’s guide go online at www.ipjc.org.

A Need for Dialogue and Change in the Me Too Movement

By Vince Herberholt

I have long thought that dialogue is an answer for many of the conflicts we experience in our country, our church and our world. Most are born of misinformation and misunderstanding brought to a level of fear that makes it difficult to find the common good.

Dialogue which involves prayer, reflection, honest speaking from the heart and head, undefended listening, and openness to compassion, healing and change is a way to build understanding and bridge conflict. However, dialogue is challenging. It’s not a simple conversation, argument or debate and it’s not a quick fix. It is, however, one of the most effective ways to resolve conflict.

In some ways, I have started down the road to dialogue by listening to the voices in the “Me Too” movement. The personal stories, pervasiveness and injustice temper my skepticism, defensiveness and resistance. I need to learn more and seek dialogue to fuel my compassion and transformation.

When I think of my reactions to the “Me Too” message, I know that I want to be an ally in the movement that leads to change and healing. As a male ally, hearing from women, that means valuing women, believing their stories, being a safe and trustworthy listener, and speaking up when men harass or demean women. Regrettably, I have been a poor listener and often silent in my response. It’s time for change.

To move forward, I want to dialogue with a diverse group of women and men on patriarchy and sexual harassment, perhaps using IPJC’s *Contemplative Dialogue Circle* process. Dialogue should be a safe place for all.

The prospect of dialogue has caused me to reflect on my own feelings and beliefs. What I share is colored by my social geography. I am a 66-year-old, Catholic, white male, married for 40 years.

My beliefs relate to my marriage and attendant household roles, child rearing, and decision making. I wrongly asserted my power based on my privileged career and earnings. That assertion was hurtful to my wife and to me. She felt less im-



portant and burdened by her work at home. I felt less connection to my home and family because of my work. I should have been more open to partnership.

My prayer and contemplation help me to center myself in my own experience and be more open. It also helps me to resist my fears, share honestly and suspend judgment.

I need to learn what patriarchy and sexual harassment mean to others. How they deal with it in their lives and what changes they would like to see. Part of my learning can come from dialogue with my wife but I need more. I also need to learn how I can join as an ally with others to reduce the impact of patriarchy.

I am challenged when I feel accused of patriarchy. That challenge moves me to decide what I do now.

I fear actual dialogue. Will I say the wrong things or find it difficult to take in what I hear? And I am afraid that I won’t hear what’s being said without resistance, assumptions, judgment and defensiveness.

I am inspired by women who have been hurt by patriarchy and sexual harassment; how deeply it has affected their lives and how they courageously raise their voices to demand change. I hope that dialogue will help me understand women’s experience and inspire me to join them in creating change and healing.

Finally, I am most afraid to acknowledge my role in patriarchy and my complacency in making changes. I play a role in living and perpetuating patriarchy. I now hope to play a role as an ally in reducing its impact.

▲ *Vince Herberholt served the US Department of Health and Human Services for 32 years, retiring as an Associate Regional Administrator in 2007. After retiring Vince completed a master’s degree in pastoral studies at Seattle University. He serves on the board of JustFaith Ministries and the Ignatian Spirituality Center where he helps to coordinate the Men’s Spirituality program. Vince is a member of St. Joseph Parish in Seattle. He has been married to Cathy Murray for 40 years. They have 2 adult sons, Bernard and Conrad.*

WWJD: What Men Can Do to Address Sexual Assault and Harassment

By Kelly Hickman

Being a man in a patriarchal society can be like a fish that does not recognize the water for the ocean; it can be hard to begin to recognize the ocean that is the patriarchy when it's all you've ever known and benefitted from. I believe that patriarchy, or any system/structure that values men over others, is harmful to all people. It gives not-men (including women and non-binary, those devalued) a self-view of subordination, which also skews their understanding of others, the world, and God. Patriarchy goes against the primary Christian understanding of the human person as having inherent worth and dignity by placing some humans above others.

The parable of the Samaritan Woman at the Well (John 4: 1-45) can serve as an example to us of how Christ in the Gospel chooses to treat those subjugated with respect and dignity, and in doing so, shows love. In Jesus' time, both Samaritans *and* women were understood to have less value than Jewish men, Jesus being the latter. This particular Samaritan woman has another layer of "less-than-hood" because of her relationships with men ("for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband"). We do not know why she has so many husbands—women at this time were unable to divorce their husbands, but a husband could divorce his wife for any reason. The Samaritan woman chooses to go to the well at noon, the hottest time of day, when no one else will be there. Jesus must have sensed her isolation. He asks her for a drink, ignoring the societal rules that would forbid

such a request. He meets her where she is, acknowledges her situation, and offers her acceptance and God's love.

What would it mean to encounter all women (and especially those oppressed due to race, class, ability, etc.) with the respect and dignity with which Christ encounters the Samaritan woman? It would mean valuing women more than our society and culture have taught us to. It would mean restoring personhood to those devalued as "less-than." Particularly, there are specific behaviors that men as beneficiaries can practice to denounce the injustices generated by our patriarchal society, and to instead offer respect, dignity, and God's love.

Be a safe space—You may not witness assault or harassment as it is happening. Being a safe, trustworthy advocate to women in your life begins with believing a woman who chooses to share her experience with you.

Validate and believe women—When you do witness an inappropriate comment or behavior, you have the power to say something on behalf of the person the comment is directed at. It could be simple (e.g., "Who talks like that anymore?") or direct ("Please don't objectify [name of your friend who is going to be so grateful for your advocacy here!]").

Hold men accountable—As a man, you are likely witness to comments and attitudes expressed by other men to each other (including you), when women are not present. This is an opportunity to speak up and put the kibosh on language and attitudes that perpetuate the valuing of men over women (patriarchy).

Reflect—Prayerfully consider your answers to the following questions...

- ✧ What role do you see for yourself in addressing sexual assault and harassment, if any?
- ✧ How has patriarchy diminished you, as a man?

In general, in what ways do you think patriarchy diminishes... White women? Women of color? Female children? Older women? Lower-income women? Women who do not identify as heterosexual? Women with a physical, mental or other disability?

Addressing sexual assault and harassment is not about transferring shame from women to men, it's not about guilt or blame. It is about our collective responsibility to set right the imbalance, the unjustness and objectification perpetuated by valuing men or specific kinds of men over others. It's about restoring personhood to all.

▲ *Kelly Hickman is the Assistant Director of the Missions Office for the Archdiocese of Seattle. She holds a master's degree in theology from Seattle University. Kelly grew up in Seattle and is a parishioner at Christ Our Hope parish in downtown Seattle.*

Christ and the Samaritan Woman, Duccio di Buoninsegna



Women Run in 2018

By Susan Rose Francois, CSJP

Voters participating in the 2018 primary elections will find an unprecedented number of women's names on the ballot. Across the country, more women are deciding to stand for political office. As of early February, the Center for American Women in Politics at Rutgers University had identified 637 women who have filed or are likely to file for the U.S. Senate, U.S. House, Governor, or other statewide office. This number does not include additional women running for elected office in their local communities.

In most cases, they are running for seats currently occupied by men. While the 2016 census counted women as making up 50.8% of the U.S. population, women hold only 19.8% of the 535 seats in the U.S. Congress and 23.7% of the 312 statewide elected offices across the country. Women of color are even

further underrepresented, making up only 35.8% of the women serving in Congress and 10.8% of the women in statewide elected office being women of color.¹ The low percentage of women in elected office continues at the local level.

“With women making up only a third of over half a million elected offices in the United States, overwhelmingly

“Across the country, more women are deciding to stand for political office.”

at the local level, we need new voices in government,” says Sofia Peiera, Mayor of Arcata, CA and community manager for She Should Run, a non-partisan effort founded in 2011 to expand the talent pool of women running for office. “People are fed up with a system that hasn't worked for them. And women are a part of the solution.”

The dramatic increase in the number of women running for office in 2018

coincides with the increased attention to the realities women face today, from the Me Too movement to the mobilization of women via the Women's March and other grassroots organizing efforts. Not only are more women running for office, women are also creating new networks of communication and support, utilizing social media and old fashioned in-person relational meetings.

For example, more than 5,000 huddles—small local groups—have formed in the last year to continue the work of the Women's March. Other women's groups have sprouted up across the country and online to register voters, advocate for issues such as education, immigration, or women's health, and to hold elected officials accountable.

This increased activism has the potential to bring together women from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences in



the work of addressing the intersection of class, race, sexual orientation, disability and gender. Jackie Yerby, a local community activist in Portland, OR, has become more engaged in local women's groups over the past year. "Often, I am the only woman of color in a space, or one of very few," she says. "It's hard to talk about racism and centering the voice of people of color in the conversation, because we always have to navigate white fragility." Yerby notes that while it is important to be in conversation, it needs to come from a space of mutuality, not privilege.

"We are at a point in time," Sofia Peiera believes, "where we are able to lift up voices that may not have been heard in the past, to lift up voices of those historically marginalized." This turning point is reflected in the increasing numbers of women running for office. "Women are realizing it is incumbent upon them to make a difference and create change." Peirera also believes that as women see other women run for office, they recognize that this is something they too can do. Life experience—as a professional, parent, entrepreneur or community leader—has prepared them, even if it is not the typical resume we have long presumed was necessary for a political

candidate. "The rules are different now," she says.

The political upheaval our country has experienced since the 2016 Presidential Election has also inspired more women to run. "I realized that our country would not change as long as

"The dramatic increase in the number of women running for office in 2018 coincides with the increased attention to the realities women face today."

people in the carpool line, regular people, stayed on the sidelines," says Laura Moser, candidate for the 7th Congressional District in Houston, TX. "But the stakes were so huge that I felt that I had to take the leap. And I'm so proud to be part of this wave of first-time women candidates all over the country."

Sofia Peiera manages the Incubator community of She Should Run, made up of more than 16,000 women across the country who are in the early stages of exploring running for office. This supportive community provides access to role models, mentors, guidance and advice. "We have been in this work since 2011, but have noticed more women stepping up." She encourages

women who want to make a difference to consider joining or running for a local board or commission. "Most elected offices are at the local level," she says.

If you believe that it is important to have women's voices present in policy discussions, legislative debates, and budget decisions, what can you do?

Be an advocate: Pay attention to issues in your local community. Join local groups advocating for change. Call your local elected officials. Make your voice heard.

Support women running for office: Volunteer or contribute to political campaigns. Encourage a strong woman you know to run for office. The She Should Run website has a nomination form.

Vote: Make sure that your voter registration is up to date. Vote in local elections. Encourage a young woman you know to register to vote.

▲ *Susan Rose Francois, CSJP serves in congregation leadership for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace. She served as City Elections Officer in Portland, Oregon prior to joining the community.*

¹ www.cawp.rutgers.edu





INTERCOMMUNITY

▶ Catholic Advocacy Day



Thank you to everyone who traveled to Olympia for Catholic Advocacy Day on February 21 to stand with our neighbors. We met with 111 legislators in 38 districts! Pictured, District 46 meets with Rep. Javier Valdez.



Senaida Rivera, OP, Elizabeth Murphy, IPJC, Karen Wolf, OPA, Catherine Prendergast, OP

▶ Human Trafficking

IPJC presented at St. Leo Church in Tacoma on the intersection of immigration issues and human trafficking as part of National Migration Week. Interested in bringing this presentation to your parish? Email ipjc@ipjc.org.

▶ Justice for Women

A statewide coalition to eliminate farmworker sexual harassment has been formed. Paula Zambrano, a



farmworker from the Yakima valley, and Giselle Cárcamo, Justice for Women Coordinator, co-chair the Farmworker Empowerment Committee.

▶ Contemplative Practices

IPJC hosted Anne Kertz Kernion on February 10 at St. Matthew's Parish in Seattle. Anne's presentations echoed the poetry of John O'Donohue, calling us to "Awaken to the mystery of being here and enter the quiet immensity of your own presence... Take time to celebrate the quiet miracles... Experience each day as a sacred gift..." She gave us contemplative practices for our daily lives and led us in stretching, breathing and chair yoga exercises.

Resources available at cardsbyanne.com/chairyoga.html



SAVE THE DATE: **SATURDAY, JUNE 2** 10AM-3:30PM • Seattle University Student Center

Care for the Earth, Care for the Poor

A summit marking the third anniversary of Pope Francis' landmark encyclical Laudato Si'

Sponsored by IPJC, St James Cathedral, Seattle U, Maryknoll, Archdiocese of Seattle and Earth Ministry

PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER

NEWS • ANNOUNCEMENTS • UPCOMING EVENTS

▶ Young Adult Justice Café



Vincetian Mission Corps Justice Café, St. Louis, MO

Justice Cafés wrapped up their conversations on topics related to health and community participation and are now planning their April Act for Justice Café! Interested in starting a Justice Café for the 2018-2019 year? Email ipjc@ipjc.org

▶ Winter Presentations by IPJC Staff

- ☞ Ministry Leadership Formation on the preferential option for the poor for Providence St. Joseph Health
- ☞ Consistent Ethic of Life keynote presentation at St. Joseph Parish, Seattle
- ☞ Human Trafficking presentation at the Tacoma, WA Friends Meeting
- ☞ Human Trafficking Summit Keynote and Workshops at Brophy College Preparatory School in Phoenix, AZ
- ☞ Immigration Workshops at Holy Names Academy
- ☞ Peace and Justice Day in Seattle
- ☞ Presentation on shareholder advocacy on gun safety at St. James Cathedral Pax Christi

▶ Donations

In honor of: Aretta McClure, Gael O'Reilly, Donna Keyser, Hazel Anne Burnett, Judy Byron, OP, Linda Haydock, SNJM, and Virginia Pearson, OP

In memory of: Peg Sullivan, Clare Roy, SNJM, George Burrows, Margaret Lichter, Marian Malonson, Maureen Carleton, and Michael Parks

▶ NWCRI Shareholders Address Gun Safety with Manufacturers, Retailers

The prophet Isaiah says, "And a little child shall lead them." Following on the tragedy in Parkland, Florida students are leading the U.S. in addressing the epidemic of gun violence. As one of the high school organizers wrote in a CNN op-ed, "And so, I'm asking—no demanding—that we take action now."

Two years ago faith based shareholders, concerned over escalating gun violence in the U.S, purchased stock in gun manufacturers Sturm Ruger and American Outdoor Bands so that we could dialogue with the companies about what they are doing to ensure the safety of children and communities whose lives may be at risk because of their products. In January 2018 we filed shareholder resolutions requesting a report on their gun safety measures.

NWCRI and ICCR members involved in this effort represent Catholic Sisters, who for almost 300 years, have educated our children in the safety of our schools and cared for the sick and injured in our hospitals.

the future has a name
and its name is

hope

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Reflection

*After reading, gather a group together to discuss this issue of A Matter of Spirit.
Following a brief reflection, guide participants in the discussion questions.*

Leader: We are all created in the likeness and image of God, and yet, our society often devalues women, especially women of color, and those with marginalized identities. The “Me Too” movement serves as a reminder to us that we must work together to dismantle the systems that allow sexual harassment and abuse to flourish.

Take a moment to consider: what is my role in ending sexual harassment and abuse? *[Pause for reflection]*

I invite you to share one thought that came up if you wish to do so. *[Pause for sharing]*

Leader: Let us now use the following discussion questions to reflect on what we learned in this issue of *A Matter of Spirit*.

- ✧ When discussing systems of sexual harassment and abuse, Theresa Earenfight asks, “What took so long?” Name one or two reasons why survivors may feel empowered to speak out now.
- ✧ Jennifer Tilghman-Havens offers concrete steps that families and communities can take to address these issues at home. What is one step you could take?
- ✧ Emily Cohen names the “Church Too” movement as a way to empower survivors of clergy sexual abuse. How can faith communities be sources of support and change?
- ✧ We heard stories and poetry from women who have faced sexual harass-

ment and abuse. Which of these stories did you most identify with, or were most moved by, and why?

- ✧ Vince Herberholt and Kelly Hickman offer ways women and men can have conversations around the “Me Too” movement. What is one action you can take to live out our call to be like Jesus who embraced the woman at the well?
- ✧ In 2018, many women are running for office in response to the issues addressed in the “Me Too” movement. Why is it important for women, especially women of color, to be represented in our political institutions?

Leader: To close our discussion today, let us say the following prayer:

Creator God, we know that you made each of us in your image. Help us to embrace each woman, man and child as people with inherent dignity and worth. Give us the strength to intervene when we hear disparaging comments from our peers, and guide our elected officials to address the systemic problems facing our society today. We ask that you bring peace to all survivors of sexual assault and abuse. Amen.