

2019 Call To Action West Coast Conference Speaker Profiles

Roy Bourgeois is an American activist, a laicized Roman Catholic priest, and founder of the human rights group School of the Americas Watch (soaw.org). He is the 1994 recipient of the Gandhi Peace Award, the 2011 recipient of the American Peace Award, and has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Ordained to the priesthood 1972 in the Maryknoll's Catholic Foreign Mission Society, Bourgeois was canonically dismissed 40 years later in 2012 from both the Maryknoll order and the priesthood because of his participation in 2008 in what was, according to the Roman Catholic Church, considered an invalid ordination of a woman and "a simulated Mass" in Lexington, KY.

Irma Dillard, RSCJ is a social activist dedicated to educating and empowering the voiceless to find their voices and take direct action for justice. She is a Change Management Consultant working with non-profits, unions, and parishes. With degrees in psychology and counseling, religious studies, and communications, Sister Irma has spent 40 years working with youth and their families, including juvenile offender programs, single mothers' support groups, and serving three San Francisco parishes doing staff development, diversity training, and facilitating staff and parish retreats. Sister Irma has been and continues to be with the people in the streets, participating in Black Lives Matter, DC Women's March, Fight for \$15, Poor People's Campaign, Rise for Climate, People's Townhall SF, DACA/Dreamers and No Ban, No Wall. She is a leader in her religious congregation's reparations to the descendants of the estimated 150 persons enslaved by her religious order in Louisiana.

Ched Myers is an activist theologian who has worked in social change movements for more than 40 years. With degrees from UC Berkley and Graduate Theological Union, he is a popular educator who animates scripture and fosters engagement in historic and current movements for peace and justice. His six books include *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*, now in its 25th edition. Ched has co-founded several collaborative projects, including the Center and Library for the Bible and Social Justice (clbsj.org), the Sabbath Economics Collaborative (sabbatheconomics.org), the Watershed Discipleship Alliance (watersheddiscipleship.org), and the Word and World School (wordandworld.org). He and his partner Elaine Enns, a restorative justice practitioner, co-direct Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries and focus on building capacity among young faith and justice leaders.

Jennielynn Holmes is currently the Senior Director of Shelter and Housing at Catholic Charities in Santa Rosa, CA, the region's largest nonprofit homeless services provider. She is a member of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women, and the First 5 Commission. Jennielynn is a driving force behind local government policies, practices and partnerships designed to fast-track permanent housing for those in need of shelter so they can benefit from treatment of mental illness, addiction and trauma. She believes that the goal of eliminating homelessness is within our reach.

Tim Stier is a Roman Catholic priest who stepped down from active ministry in March 2005. After prayerful discernment and years of working for church reform, he felt called to choose exile from active parish ministry to advocate for groups who have been marginalized and

unjustly treated by the church. Among these are women, sexual abuse survivors, and LGBTQ persons. In 2010, he began a weekly protest (that continues to this day) outside the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland to stand in public solidarity with the excluded.

Miriam Noriega is the program assistant of the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, a CA statewide organization that works to make the criminal justice system more just, and the immigration system more fair and humane. Her family's experience as a first-generation immigrant family is one of the pillars of her immigrant advocacy. She is starting her career path as a minister with a focus on guiding immigrants to grow in their spirituality because she believes it is a key to coping and healing.

Jane Via is a bishop of the Roman Catholic Women Priests (RCWP). After several years of teaching Religious Studies at Marquette University, she served as County Counsel and as a county prosecutor with the District Attorney's office, both in San Diego, for a combined 26 years. Following Ghandi's example, she is trying to be the change she wants to see in the church. In 2005, she founded Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community with Rod Stephens, a former Roman Catholic priest. She was ordained a priest in 2006 on the Bodensee off Swiss shores. She is a member of the Immaculate Heart Community of Los Angeles and lives in San Diego with her husband, Phil Faker. They have two adult sons.

Ian Stanley Posadas is the founder of LGBTQ Connection, the first community-based initiative aimed at developing a healthy, diverse and inclusive community driven by emerging LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning) leaders in Napa and Sonoma counties, working together for the greater good. LGBTQ Connection visibly and actively supports the LGBTQ community at all levels from youth to seniors. He is a member of St John the Baptist Catholic Church in Napa, CA. He came out in his twenties and received strong church community support. Ian was a bilingual middle school teacher for seven years and a Catholic youth minister at a 12,000-member parish for four years, and a secular youth worker and community organizer for another sixteen years.

Bread for the World's Racial Wealth Gap Simulation is an interactive tool that helps people understand the connections among racial inequity, hunger, poverty, and wealth. See www.bread.org/simulation. Participants will be able to access the entire Simulation on thirteen US government policies that have led to our current racial wealth gap. The simulation was written by staffs of Bread for the World and Network, the Catholic Social Justice Advocacy organization directed by Sister Simone Campbell, SSS.

Re-Generation Cohort, now in its second year, is a group of twelve young visionary leaders and change-makers who are interested in ministry and focused on social justice. Call To Action's national director, Zach Johnson and Claire Hitchins, a JustChurch organizer, work with them for six months and direct them in a three-day retreat with a strong focus on the social justice teaching of the Catholic Church. Each has an elder in the movement and a peer mentor, and is responsible for developing a social justice project. These projects will be presented as workshops throughout the conference.