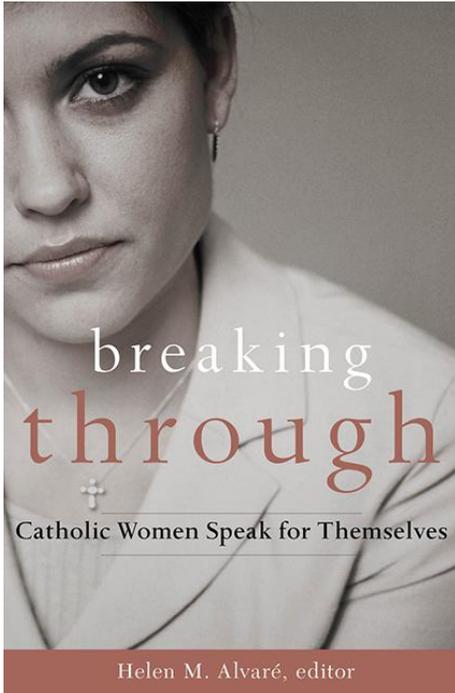


## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Catholic Women Let Their Voice Be Heard

HUNTINGTON, Indiana, September 24, 2012 – “Catholic women are some of the most misunderstood and intriguing people in American society today,” Helen M. Alvaré says in **Breaking Through: Catholic Women Speak for Themselves**, just released by Our Sunday Visitor.

American pop culture increasingly treats the “Catholic female” as an oxymoron, or at least as a split personality: a woman who, while she might say “yes” to the faith as a private source of comfort, should say “no” to its countercultural teachings on sex, contraception, marriage, and more.

“But Catholic women themselves are in a different place,” stated Alvaré. “Faced with situations their grandmothers and even their mothers never imagined, they are faced with the question of whether a 2000-year-old Church has anything to offer them at this moment in time. They are trying to make sense of the intersection of faith, modern science, and their contemporary, lived experience.”

The nine women who contributed to this book come from a variety of backgrounds, experiences and occupations “All of the them, including myself, have struggled to figure out how the demands of their faith allow them to live freely and even with joy in the context of some very pointed and current challenges,” stated Alvaré. “Their stories – full of honesty, but ultimately hope – come to a new and deeper understanding of the realities of being a Catholic woman in America today.”

Topics explored by the contributors include:

- Navigating dating and sexpections
- Being Catholic in light of the sexual abuse scandal
- Wrestling with the issue of contraception
- Faith, psychology and same-sex attraction
- The counter-cultural “draw” of religious life
- Squaring politics with everyday Catholic living
- The Church and the single mom

# Our Sunday Visitor



In addition to Alvaré, Contributors to **Breaking Through: Catholic Women Speak for Themselves** include:

- Marie Anderson, M.D.
- Elise Italiano, M.A.
- Sister Mary Gabriel, S.V.
- Mary Devlin Capizzi, J.D.
- Rebecca Vitz Cherico, Ph.D.
- Mary Hallan FioRito, J.D.
- Michelle A. Cretella, M.D.
- Kim Daniels, J.D.

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The world's largest English-language Catholic publisher, Our Sunday Visitor serves millions of Catholics globally through its publishing, offertory, and communication services. Established in 1912, Our Sunday Visitor publishes a wide range of books including Bibles, biographies of the saints, books by Pope Benedict XVI, children's books, devotionals, bible studies, inspirational works, and curriculum. Our Sunday Visitor is a not-for-profit organization, returning a portion of net earnings back to the Catholic community through the Our Sunday Visitor Institute. For more information, visit [www.osv.com](http://www.osv.com).

## Interview Questions

Helen M. Alvaré

### **Catholic Women Speak for Themselves**

1. Why did you decide to do this book?
2. How did you choose the various contributors?
3. What does your book say to the professional Catholic woman that perhaps others do not?
4. What advice would you offer to the young Catholic woman just embarking on her adult life?
5. Who were your female role models?
6. Talk a bit about some of your original research on single motherhood as it relates to population and poverty.
7. What is Women Speak for the Themselves.com? Why did you and Kim Daniels start it? Going forward, how do you hope to capitalize on that letter and the overwhelming response to it by women from around the country?
8. You serve as a Consultant to the Pontifical Council for the Family. What do you do in that capacity?
9. What may be some of your upcoming speaking engagements, so our audience might meet you in person?

## About The Author



### Helen M. Alvaré

Helen M. Alvaré is a law professor at George Mason University in Arlington, Virginia, where she teaches and writes in the areas of family law, and law and religion. She is also a Senior Fellow at the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton, New Jersey, and Chair of the Institute's Task Force on Conscience Protection, as well as a Consultant to the Pontifical Council for the Laity. She is a consultant for ABC News on matters concerning the Catholic Church, a regular contributor to both secular and religious media, and a frequent presenter at academic and religious conferences both in the United States and abroad.

In 2012, Alvaré and Kim Daniels coauthored an open letter on women and religious freedom that has thus far attracted over 30,000 women's signatures (see [womenspeakforthemselves.com](http://womenspeakforthemselves.com)). Beginning with a few dozen friends and colleagues, the letter spread via woman-to-woman emails to women of every conceivable background, employment, education, and political party. Within a few weeks, tens of thousands of women had signed. It continues to attract supporters and, along with its accompanying Facebook page, has become a tool for assisting women to promote religious freedom and women's flourishing in their own spheres of influence.