

## April 6, 2025 – Women and Gender in Medieval Christianity



This lecture delivers an historical and theological introduction to women and gender in medieval Christianity. After setting the scene, we investigate the example of the Benedictine prioress Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), canonized and named a Doctor of the Church by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012. After exploring her contributions to theology, music, church reform, science and medicine, and mysticism, we will turn to Benedict's claim at her canonization that she exhibits a "feminine genius." Having examined her work ourselves, we will ask whether her contributions to the Church are uniquely "feminine." What does characterizing her genius this way say about women (and men) and the possibilities of their contributions to leadership in the Church today?

### Craig Tichelkamp



Craig Tichelkamp, Th.D., is a Catholic theologian who teaches at Stonehill College, Tufts University, and Harvard Divinity School. His recent book is titled *The Mystified Letter: How Medieval Theology Can Reenchant the Practice of Reading* (Fortress, 2023). His other academic work has appeared in the peer-reviewed journal *Medieval Mystical Theology* and the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*.