

Catholic Women's Ordination – Response to Pope Francis interview with CBS 20 May 2024

For Immediate Release: May 21, 2024

We are shocked to hear that Pope Francis has rejected the possibility of women serving as ordained Deacons or members of the clergy. ([Interview on CBS news on 20 May](#))

Many CWO members facilitated the process whereby people from parishes were consulted about their experience of Church and what they would like to see happen. Women's ordination came up time and time again. A frequently stated concern was that there was no point to the consultation because "no-one listens". In bypassing the October Synodal process, Pope Francis appears to be proving this to be a valid concern. What happened to "journeying together"?

After a blunt "No" to the question of whether a young Catholic girl would ever have the opportunity to be ordained, Pope Francis stated

"But women have always had, I would say, the function of Deaconesses without being Deacons, right? Women are of great service as women, not as ministers...within the Holy Orders."

This is insulting. Don't women and girls experience enough oppression and discrimination in the world? Shouldn't we expect better treatment from our Church and from this Pope? Why is the Institution still pursuing this misogynist path?

As Francis well knows, many women are called to ordained ministry. They suffer because they cannot test their calling; some have left to become Priests in other denominations and some have followed the Spirit's call and become Roman Catholic Women Priests. They conduct meaningful ministries within their communities. The Institution's response – excommunication!

We know that women served as ministers from the very beginning of Catholic Church history in the tradition of the Deacon Phoebe (Rm 16:1). Evidence is readily available for anyone who chooses to remove their misogynist blinkers.

We beg Pope Francis to listen not only to women called to ministry but also to the cries of parishioners throughout the world.

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[Catholic Women's Ordination](#) (CWO) is a UK based organisation. For over 30 years, we have prayed and campaigned for ordained priestly ministry for women in a renewed Roman Catholic Church. We commit to demonstrating that the exclusion of women from ordination in the Roman Catholic Church reinforces the oppression and poverty of women and girls around the world