



CWO

Nov - Dec 2019

eNews

Issue 119

A leading voice for women in the R C Church

SIMPLE COURAGE!



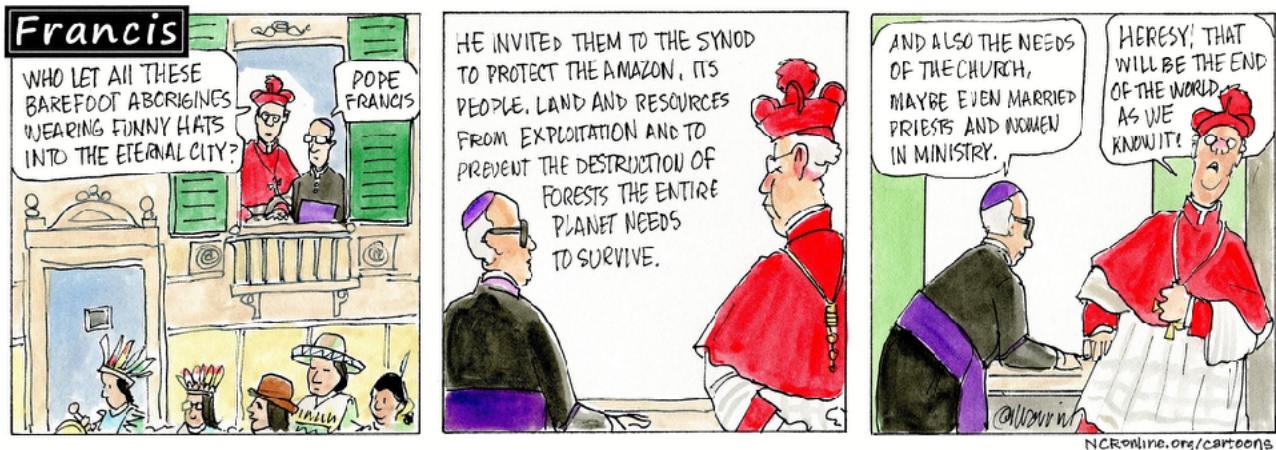
AN
ORDINARY
PARISHIONER
MAKES A
STAND

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We are grateful to Pat Marrin, of NCR, who has kindly allowed us the use of this fine cartoon. It says it all.

Onwards and upwards,

Mary Ring, Editor.

news@catholic-womens-ordination.co.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/CatholicWomensOrdination/>

<http://catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk/>

<https://twitter.com/CWOCampaign>



EMPOWERED WOMEN AT THE AMAZON SYNOD

*Well done to Miriam Duignan, Kate McElwee, Therese Koturbash, Kathy Gibbons Schuck, Pat Brown and Alicja Baranowska, who held vigil outside the Vatican as the Amazon Synod began, wearing **green for the earth**, and **purple for women in the Church**, above.*

“The church would not be alive in the Amazon if it wasn’t for women,” said Miriam Duignan, when interviewed by Angela Giuffrida of the Guardian. “They are undertaking priestly roles without having the title of priest.” Our women also spoke to Claire Giangravé of RNS, and articles were carried by the New York Times, amongst others:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/22/catholic-church-lift-ban-on-female-priests-activists-say>

<https://religionnews.com/2019/10/23/final-synod-document-expected-to-mention-female-deacons/>

CLICK TO HEAR MIRIAM AND PAT ON RADIO

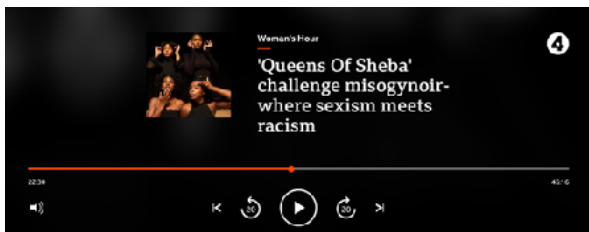
BBC iPlayer, 15th November 2019, and start 22.30 minutes in, as below, to hear **CWO's Miriam Duignan and Soline Humbert** talking to Jane Garvey on **Woman's Hour** about the optimistic aspects of the Synod:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0oob8of?fbclid=IwAR3p_RHxxJaAoxFoN3JWHpQEQfQFDEZw6FZuundC_jfYFEcFv-oNvtHHCgk

and go to this link:

<https://www.wradio.com.co/amp/nota.aspx?id=3969883>

to hear our **Pat Brown** in a fascinating interview with W Radio Com.Co in Colombia from the early stages of the Synod



La británica Pat Brown es activista de la organización 'Women's Ordination Worldwide', que reivindica un mayor papel de las mujeres en la Iglesia.



WOW IN LISBON

WOMEN'S ORDINATION WORLDWIDE



Representatives of worldwide groups who call for women's ordination met in Lisbon as guests of **We Are Church Portugal** in October. Our magnificent CWO member Pat Brown (third from right, back) is stepping down after more years of service than she probably cares to remember, but her spirit and support remain indefatigable. Mary Ring (front right) takes over from her. Please keep praying for us.

<http://womensordinationcampaign.org>

In a Nutshell

This year we shall

1. Focus on growing the movement
2. Raise awareness
3. Move beyond English-speaking world
4. Tell stories of our women and saints
5. Empower workers in the field
6. Give clear calls to action
7. Include in-person members
8. Carry on! We are progressing
9. Keep doing it now
10. Be the field hospital for women who are struggling.

CATHY'S STORY

FINDING TRANQUILITY IN CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO

When CWO received a call for help from this writer, we did what we could. This is her story.

'And what did you hope to achieve by that?'

Thus mused my sceptical work colleague as I described my silent witness in favour of the ordination of women at a recent ordination in my local Catholic parish.

I hadn't intended to go at all. We had an ordination in our parish a couple of years ago and I came away from it feeling cross and alienated. It was a former parishioner and I don't disrespect either his commitment or his journey. But the FUSS that was made over it....

The sanctuary had been freshly carpeted in deep red for the occasion (RIP the excellent acoustics the building possessed beforehand), flowers arranged, readers rehearsed, parishioners warned to arrive early and not to hog all the car parking spaces, etc. The choir was usurped by an imported all clerical seminary choir which only seemed to know how to sing in Latin. Rows and rows of diocesan clergy took up the front pews at

the service. It was all *so male* somehow and as an involved female member of the laity I think we felt irrelevant - as if it was all happening over our heads. I vowed at that point NEVER to go to another ordination in the RC church until women priests were finally allowed.

I have long believed that the Holy Spirit has been prompting the ordination of women in the Catholic Church, albeit to a reformed and reordered concept of service.

So the desperate language of the diocesan prayer for (male) vocations to the priesthood annoys me. We have vocations, but the institutional church is so terrified of conceding women's equality with men that it refuses to hear Her clear message.

Instead, in European countries, and in England and Wales in particular, we have stop-gapped the problem by importing former Anglicans (many against the ordination of women in the Anglican church) and by depriving developing countries of their own clergy, which are sorely needed at home.

So, when our church choir was recently invited to sing at another ordination in our parish - this time of a local former (unmarried) Anglican vicar who had already reached the usual Catholic retirement age, I balked at the idea and said a firm 'No, I'm not coming' to our organist.

That's when the pressure started. And to be honest, I am usually a very committed chorister and become irritated when colleagues take the 'I'll come if I've got nothing better to do' approach to our church choir. 'We need you' I was told in no uncertain terms. And I did feel a bit bad leaving the only other alto on her own. To make matters more challenging, the choir had been given some rather difficult music to sing too.

So, despite my deep-seated misgivings, I relented and turned up to the rehearsals against my better judgement and set about getting the choir the support it needed in order to deliver a good sound on the day. But I knew that I'd only be able to turn up at the event if I somehow made my position clear.

That is when I contacted CWO.



As with quite a few organisations on the radical end of the church spectrum, I had been supportive of CWO for years but never got around to being a paid-up member. I was delighted to receive rapid and supportive communications from people I hadn't met. Browsing the website, I noted that CWO member demonstrate outside Cathedrals wearing purple.

So, I trawled the internet and ordered a simple purple dress. From CWO I received the loan of a stole which stated 'Ordain Women' in bold white letters, and someone else sent me a CWO badge. My attire was ready.

The event came along and proceeded as expected. In the end we mastered the music and it all went swimmingly. It was still important to honour the journey of the ordinand, whatever his provenance.

Disappointingly few of my friends were prepared to join me by donning a purple scarf in solidarity with me but I didn't care. Even if I'd been the only voice in the wilderness, I would have persevered. And no one said a word.

Not a **WORD!** Make no mistake, they noticed all right. I was standing at the front in the choir ranks and even sat and chatted to the Bishop at the reception after the Mass.

I concluded that the serried ranks of clergy just didn't want to lose an argument - so they said nothing. Maybe some of them were ashamed. And if they weren't, they should have been.

I felt not a single trace of embarrassment. I knew I was bearing witness to something fundamental and something that is going to come to pass. It was the **ONLY** way I could've been present.

So, to answer my colleague's question 'What did I achieve?' Well no revolution obviously, and no debate, at least there. But I had the courage of my convictions. I participated in they only way I could.

The question of the ordination of women in the Catholic church will not go away, in fact there has been a vibrant public debate about it recently in the letter pages of the Tablet and many members of the existing clergy have no problem with it. I believe it will happen. I just pray that I will live to see it.

THANK YOU so much to Cathy Scott for sharing this with us.

For having had the courage and the conviction to have carried out such a brave act of witness - too many of our parishes remain terrifying places when it comes to questioning the status quo. And for having had the courage to share it with our readers.

Isn't it **shameful**, that within our Christian creed that preaches love and acceptance, we Catholics only too often can't say what we really think?

Enough!

Time to call it out.

THE WOMEN THE VATICAN COULDN'T SILENCE



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XY2ZOD-08GE&feature=youtu.be>

DUBLIN, 3rd Nov, 2019

When **Dr Mary McAleese**, former president of Ireland, was awarded the Alfons Auer Award for Ethics for her work in canon law and children's rights by the University of Tübingen on 30th November this year, We Are Church Ireland and the School of Religion at Trinity College Dublin determined to mark the occasion.

Together with Voices of Faith, the campaign for women's leadership in the Catholic Church, they invited **Sr Joan Chittister, OSB**, the international spiritual writer, speaker and theologian to share a platform with Mary. Then they livestreamed their conversation with Ursula Halligan, political editor of Ireland's TV3.

Click on the link above to hear the lifetime experience, wisdom and hopes of these two wise and courageous women that the Vatican has tried to silence.

And ask yourself: **Why isn't the Vatican beating a path to their door?**

ON THEIR WORDS

“(Sister Joan’s) point that resonated strongly with me was about language, how the language of all our prayers and liturgical events is male. She considers this to be a major problem, and that the misogynistic attitudes prevalent in the Church will not be changed until the language is changed. So she urged all of us to do everything we can in any type of religious event in which we participate, to get rid of all traces of sexist language...”



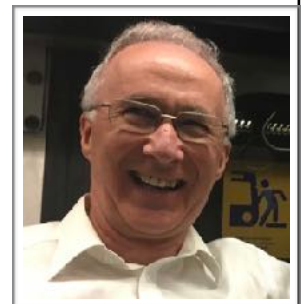
As regards the defective nature of Catholic sexual teaching, she (Sr. Joan) said that it dated from long before Christ, back to the ancient rural communities, tilling the earth and growing their food. They sowed the seed in the earth, and it grew. So they presumed that human fertilization was similar, in that the woman’s body received the life-giving semen from the man, and it grew... That was the biology on which Thomas Aquinas worked to produce his teaching that women are secondary and of lesser importance. It is only in the last two hundred years that the ovum was discovered, and revealed the fact that the woman contributed equally to the life-giving process. So she concluded that the Church’s sexual teaching was not so much bad theology, but, first and foremost, bad biology...”

From Fr Tony Flannery’s website:

<http://www.tonyflannery.com/womens-voices-the-vatican-couldnt-silence/?fbclid=IwAR3GptbPd57VltckeujFzZRCBOExAZrwlvfRL2scoCsJNv34DKV6VNSILqc>

“Their conversation was inspirational! Imagine what our church would be like if Mary and Joan were organising things? They point the way to how we should be following Christ today.”

Colm Holmes, spokesperson, We are Church Ireland.



“Recalling the six years she spent studying for a doctorate in canon law in Rome, living in the environs of a seminary and monastery, she (Mary McAleese) said she had encountered many young seminarians and priests.



‘I became very much aware of the dysfunction at the heart of seminary life and the dysfunction at the heart of much of the priesthood... The number of fake-hetero misogynistic homophobic gays I met frightened me. The homophobia of people who are gay is a lie - it is a vicious lie. But they live it and in living it, apart from making themselves miserable, they also make a lot of other people miserable.’ She said that as pastors, ‘their capacity for dispersing misery is really immense. That worries me greatly.’”

Bridget Mary Meehan, Bishop, ARCWP (Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests)

TOWARDS WHOLENESS



Towards Wholeness
Re-imagining the roles of women and men
in Catholic Church ministry

PARISHIONERS'
CALL



On 26th Oct in Salisbury, **PARISHIONERS' CALL** brought together Katharine Salmon of CWO, and Mike Kerrigan of Movement for a Married Clergy.

We were so sorry that Sr Katrina Alton was unwell. Mary Ring took her place, reporting from **Women's Ordination Worldwide**, to discuss ways in which our Church can move forwards together towards wholeness. There was a lovely atmosphere together.



Parishioners listened with interest, above and left.

Mike Kerrigan has been calling for married clergy for decades, with little response from our bishops. He now welcomed this shared platform. Our Katharine Salmon from CWO spoke with her usual clarity and compassion, making us realise how much our church has lost as she has taken her ministry - of necessity - to the Church of England. And Mary Ring outlined how the German and Austrian church are taking matters into their own hands: "Why do you even need priests at all?" ask *We are Church (Wir Sind Kirche)* in Austria. As we know, Jesus never ordained anyone. We were also delighted to hear first-hand from Anne Martin who was present on the boat on the Danube where the original seven Roman Catholic Women Priests were ordained in 2001: <https://www.romancatholicwomenpriests.org>

Parishioners' Call, acting as responsible shareholders in our Church, works for the shared ministry of women and men, whether married, single or celibate. <https://www.parishionerscall.com>

NEWS AND LINKS

*Hild of Whitby and
the Ministry of
Women in the
Anglo-Saxon World*



ANNE E. INMAN

Hild of Whitby and the Ministry of Women in the Anglo-Saxon World ANNE E. INMAN

This book tells the story of Hild, the abbess of a highly successful double monastery at Whitby in Northumbria, where she was responsible for the education of five future bishops. Here she exercised an authority which in subsequent centuries would be reserved exclusively for men....

As the Catholic Church struggles under the weight of centuries-old misogyny, it is surprising to see how, in the early medieval period, abbesses had shared governance with bishops. As that church struggles with a shortage of male priests to celebrate the sacraments, it is instructive to see how many sacramental ministries were once exercised by female monastics.

<https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781978700673/Hild-of-Whitby-and-the-Ministry-of-Women-in-the-Anglo-Saxon-World>

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SR LUCY KURIEN

whose MAHER Ashram loving homes have given life and hope to over 4,000 women, children and men since 1997, asked Pope Francis in a one-to-one interview last month "to consider women for priesthood in the Catholic church".

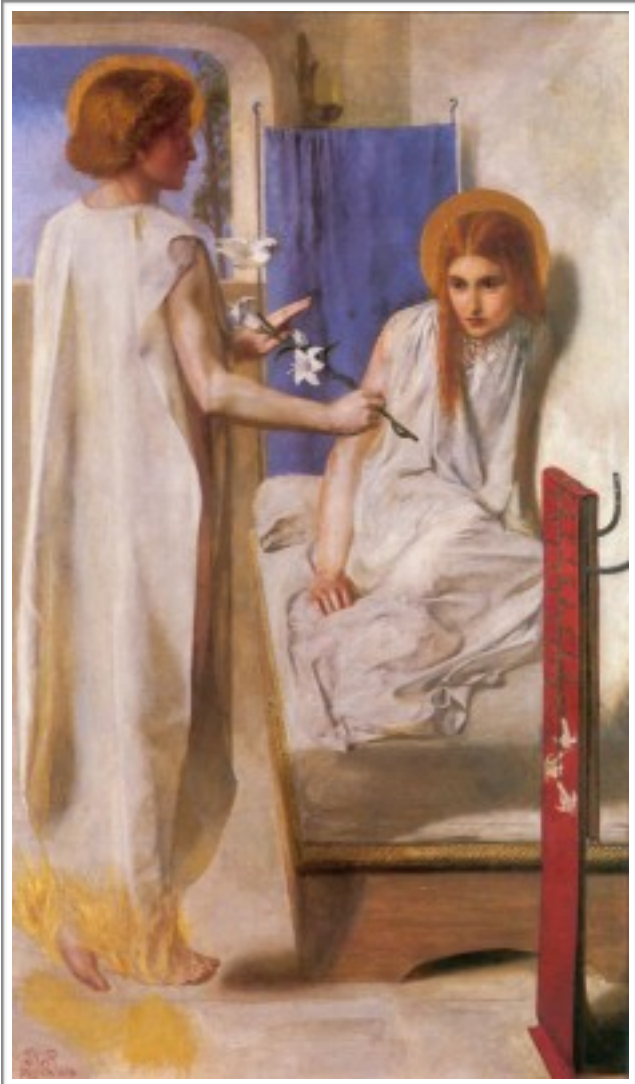
Speaking to the Hindustan Times, she said, "In Christianity, traditionally it is the men who have been priests and we have requested the Pope to consider women for priesthood. We have been pushing this idea of women for priesthood for some time."

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/pune-nun-meets-pope-francis-makes-petition-to-consider-women-for-priesthood/story-NmVoc6NdsxqZlgcFmVbdYO.html>



MAHER

ADVENT



NO MORE LYING ABOUT MARY

It's Advent, and the same old lies about Mary are slipping over pulpits and out of parish letters, Christmas cards, public prayers, TV holiday movies, and late night comics' jokes. The subjugation of Mary, the maligning of her as meek, mild, and mindless, has been harmful to millions of women over many centuries. Hiding within the wonder of Christmas are a thousand years of doctrinal female subjugation, doctrines that, like tinsel, are dripped all over the season of Christmas.....

Mary, wanted by God, according to the angel, for her bold, independent, adventuresome spirit, decides to bear a holy child – for a bold agenda: to bring the mighty down from their thrones; to scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts, to fill the hungry with good things and send the rich empty away. This is Mary: well-spoken, wise, gritty.

Nancy Rockwell, from the Patheos website:

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/biteintheapple/no-lying-mary-2/>

*Thanks to CWO member **Katharine Salmon** for sharing this with us.*

*And thanks also to **Penelope Middelboe** for finding this sermon given by John Lee, at St Martins-in-the-Field in 1916, when she was researching women's suffrage in the UK, and for sharing it with us.*

THE CHURCH AND WOMEN

'It was to women that our Lord entrusted the announcement of His Resurrection. They bore his message, this most important message of all time, not to the world only, but to his intimate followers. They were Apostles and Evangelists to the Apostles and Evangelists themselves; to them and not to St John or St Peter was given the first evidence of His appearing. ... it is amazing that men to whom the Resurrection is the very fibre of their faith, the centre of their hope, the very heart of their Sacramental life, should lay aside as of no significance this solemn trust which was given to women; it is assuredly the most amazing instance of religious prejudice.'

AND FINALLY...



...is it a bird?

is it a plane?

is it a trouserless Bishop??

eNews was sent this rather extraordinary picture from Hinsley Hall, where our Bishops were holding their Plenary Meeting at the end of November.

A notice at the bottom appeared to explain that this was to launch the Year of the Word. When eNews asked for a better picture, its mole found that the effigy had quietly disappeared.

Had someone pointed out the mindlessly awful connotations of a trouserless Bishop at this time of IICSA? Had someone set it up as a malicious joke? Or is it possible that this was a genuine attempt at communication? If the last, we should really be worrying.

Your suggestions, please. news@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

CWO SAINTS

Mary MacKillop
Ruth Norton
John Hatfield
Celia Greenwood
Michael O'Gara
Sheila Houlihan
Mary Daly
Estelle White
Pat McCarron
Marcella Althaus-Reid
Astrid Klemz
Jean Palmer
Elizabeth Rendall
Maureen Brown
Tissa Balasuriya
Jack Sutcliffe
Pat Regini
Mary Ann Schoettly
Pam Skelton
Robert Kaggwa
Mike Ward
Anne Hepburn
Peter Nelson
Stanley Baxter
David Konstant
Eileen Sikorski
Fr Kevin Kelly
Fr Owen Hardwicke
Jackie Hawkins
Peter Seddon
Veronica Seddon
Sr. Catherine Houlihan

Pray for us



PRAYER LINK

Wednesday between 6.00 and 7.00pm, please pray for CWO, its members and its mission.

Saturdays at noon, join with women and men all over the world to pray for the work of Women's Ordination Worldwide (WOW).

Please take part in one or both of these prayer networks if and when you can.

THE CWO PRAYER

Moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit, we cannot remain ignorant of this injustice in our midst.

We long for all humanity to be acknowledged as equal, particularly among your community of the church, so we pray grieving for the lost gifts of so many women.

We ask you, God of all peoples, to bring insight and humility to all those in positions of dominance, and an understanding that the ascended Lord called us all to act doing Christ's work here and now.

We ask this of you, God our Creator, Jesus our Redeemer, Spirit our Sustainer.

CWO MERCHANDISE

These items are great way to advertise CWO without costing you very much. I often see people in my rear view mirror admiring the wit of my car sticker! says Pat Brown.

You can leave the pens lying around in places where it might be difficult to leave a CWO leaflet. The badges attract a lot of attention with the slogan based on the letters of ROME. We now have mugs which as well as being practical are a good way of advertising CWO. You might like to send one to your bishop!

		how many	unit cost	total
Biro - CWO logo, website and phone no	Purple with silver lettering Black ink		0.80	
Car sticker CWO logo website and phone number	Purple on cream		1.50	
Mug CWO logo website "CWO's my cup of tea"	Purple on white Buy for your office, church tea room, meeting room		4.50 each 3 for £12 10 for £35	
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orders £10 - 20	5.00
orders over £20	free

AWAKENING

Catholic Women's Ordination from the Public Square,

by **Myra Poole and Pippa Bonner.**

£10.00 post free, from info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

address as above for CWO Merchandise

