

Vatican Embassy, March 24, 2016: On Holy Thursday, Janice Sevre-Duszynska, Jane Via, and Roy Bourgeois witnessed at the Vatican Embassy for equality in the Church. Photo by Jim FitzGerald.



TO POPE FRANCIS AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Where there is injustice, silence is complicity. We have come to the Vatican Embassy in Washington, D.C., to speak out against the grave injustice being done to women and gay people by the Catholic Church.

1. WOMEN IN THE CHURCH: God created women and men equal: "There is neither male nor female. In Christ you are one." (Galatians 3:28) God calls both men and women to the priesthood, but Catholic women who are called are rejected because of their gender. Who are men to say that their call from God is authentic, but God's call to women is not? The ordination of women is not a problem with God, but with an all-male clerical culture that views women as inferior to men. The problem is sexism and sexism, like racism, is a sin.

2. GAY PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH: The official teaching of the Catholic Church states that homosexuals are "objectively disordered." For millions of gay people, this teaching instills shame and self-hatred. It has contributed to gay people being rejected by their families, fired from their jobs, bullied and even killed. This teaching has also contributed to suicides, especially among teenagers.

God does not make mistakes in creation. Our all-loving God created everyone of equal worth and dignity: gay and straight. Our Church's teaching on homosexuality is cruel and is based on a theology inconsistent with the teaching of Jesus.

We are here today to call upon Pope Francis and the Catholic Church to ordain women and start treating LGBT people as equals.

In Solidarity,

Jane Via, Ph.D., J.D. is a former professor of theology, a retired county prosecutor and an ordained Roman Catholic woman priest. In 2005, she founded Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community (www.mmacc.org), an independent Catholic parish in the Roman Catholic tradition which thrives in San Diego, CA. She is married and has two adult, feminist sons." (Contact: 619-890-2590)

Janice Sevre-Duszynska, a retired teacher and journalist, is a priest in the Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests and an international leader for women's equality in the Roman Catholic Church. Her journey is explored in the award-winning documentary, "Pink Smoke Over the Vatican." (Contact: 859-684-4247)

Roy Bourgeois served as a Catholic priest for 40 years. He is a Purple Heart recipient and a Nobel Peace Prize nominee. In 2012, he was expelled from the priesthood and the Maryknoll Fathers because of his public support for the ordination of women. (Contact: 706-570-5359, or 706-682-5369)