

***This document contains the notes taken at each table during the listening session, as well as the messages left on Post-it notes on the wall. Names have been removed, and the notes have been formatted for greater ease in reading.***

## **Table 1**

*Question 1. As you reflect on the role of women in ministry in the church, what moved you and how is the spirit moving in you?*

- Comments on the context of what is happening in the world. We have worked for 40 years and 120 years - and he is motivated to keep work.
- Had not thought much about this topic of women in ministry until started participating in Discerning Deacons pilgrimage in Mexico City. Amazon participants spoke so eloquently how women should participate in the church. Learned about Phoebe. Phoebe started to move her to this whole issue and the need. The synod made the issue even more evident.
- Come from a long line of strong women. Grandmother and mother worked in same soup kitchen. Tremendous women religious in life. Pastor asked her what frustrated her when visited the sick: anoint. Believes needs to be broader. It's the movement of the Holy Spirit.
- Same as previous speaker - always strong women in life. Hurts him because loves the church very much and grieved to see how much it hurts the people in his life. Daughters and granddaughters. Concerned about grandchildren and participation in the church.
- Also raised by strong woman - heart and soul of church where raised. Never dawned on her that was not a role in the church. First female lector; mom head of parish council. Never seemed to be the limits that understand that are there. Have not had friends who felt limited. The last two to three years seen a drastic reversal in the parish were raised. Have now banned women on the altar other than lector. Had funeral here then there. Very disappointed at what happened at the parish. Really sad at the way her parishes had changed. Going backwards. Report appalling.
- Listened rather than read because struggled with reading. Unconscious insult in this document. Women may think they have a vocation. How do men know unless they think or feel it? Remembers women in the 70s with true vocation to be a deacon. This is fiction. These are people clinging to power. It may be a false conversation. Message of Jesus: Care for each other and care for the poor.

Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

Table Notes

*Question 2: What struck you most and what resonated the most with you from the first round?*

- The context: period of reaction, which makes me feel like we are losing ground rapidly. Poignant: when your parish's regression punishes those who gave the most. Inherent conflict of interest - clinging to power. The common experience of really strong women contributing the most to their parishes and families.
- About power, about control, insecurity, toxic masculinity; money. We are different - male and female. Bring those differences into the positions of power. We are missing half of the people. It's the elephant in the Vatican - power and money.
- Strong women came p often. Part of document read - would ruin the masculinity of Jesus. Don't know where came from. Yes, Jesus was a male but so what. Did not compute. Men don't feel more masculine because have strong women in life. May feel more masculine. Second message - we are going backwards. Mother of sons. Losing the younger generation. Don't have an equal church - part of the problem
- Power; this document is fiction. The same fiction that mother's parish is perpetuating. Another local parish has become one of those conservative parish. Came back to HT - see women in leadership and generally support women. Coming here because see strength. LGBT group has grown so much over the last several years.
- A couple of things: stories of people that bring us to this spot. Strong women in lives. This is a community that is all about relationships. They bring us to God. When get in way of relationships, it breaks the design of Christ. It's a body that you join. Most gripping was the story of A's mother. To hear the pain gone through so illustrative of the canary in the coal mine. It is toxic and killing the community. It is not what the community is about. Reactionary type of priest
- Cry the most here because feel closest to mom. Something special at Holy Trinity. Way people come and open and generally respectful. Fact that can point to growth here, which is not common. Appreciated comments about the report. Solace that there is an alternative like at this parish. Sometimes get it wrong here, but more often than not there is a good intent and an effort to be good Christians.
- Mentioned power and must talk about fear. Young people - when think about what have lived through. 9/11, crisis in war, pandemic. Looking for structure. Continuum freedom and security. Must figure out how to balance. What are we missing by not taking advantage of the gifts of all people in the governance of the church. Must

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

figure out how to have those conversations in a loving but challenging way. Are we as church acting in accordance with the believed principles?

- “And let the Church say Amen”
- Constant battle - fight the good fight
- Amazon - doing it and not hurting Church
- Gay man - parents wonderful; priests who consistently were disapproving; discussions with women religious - they are doing priestly work. Diocesan priests - often gay but hiding it.

### *Third round: Common Themes of the dialogue*

- Strong women
- Context of regression and a thirst for security
- Holy Trinity stands in contrast to that regression, which is a blessing
- The paper is simply not persuasive - one speaker called it fiction - so what is really going on. It's about power, fear, control, toxic masculinity, money

### *What moved you most deeply?*

- One addition - always question faith. Benedictine oblate. Battling for funeral in Colorado. What is liturgical reason?
- Everything in this document is not final. Keep pressing on and the Holy Spirit will help.
- Pope John XIII in the kitchen. Election of Francis a sigh and someone who opened the window. Leo and Cardinal - not afraid to speak out.
- Quick statement - practicing Catholics.

### Common themes

1. Church clinging, going backwards and power; think they are losing it. What moved her - not alone in way think or act because church has driven a lot of people away and they are not less worthy to be part of this church. Not really taking seriously what is at the core of the gospel
2. Common themes: frustration, anger, senseless it is/fiction - a mammoth work of fiction and people will eventually see through it. Because it's not rooted in their personal experience, this desire for something they never had, will fail. The issue is where will future generations be left. Must identify what the Jesuit parishes

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

have in common and preserve that. Not hopeless because there is a family out there and helpful to tap into it.

3. Nothing original to add. The testimonies are rooted in a deep faith. Hope comes from love and devotion to church. Breaks our hearts to see where it has gone. Hero - St. Paul. Made case that is going to gentile. There is no male and female.
4. Pick up the themes - rest of the jesuits. Where are there Jesuit parishes? One thing that finds comfort and support. Proud when Trinity stands apart. Ok, when people don't like us. Continue to have opportunities for the whole parish. Good to have these types of sessions. Similar session on issues with government. Power when bring it all together.
5. Value in getting together - good I am not crazy. 5 models of church. Hierarchical is just one model. Here because love God and do as Christ does. Mom said that if you grow up and don't find this the right church to facilitate your relationship with God, then find the church that is. Could ask the Holy Spirit to engage with people who do prefer more security - must engage with them
6. Moved most deeply - Richard Rohr - work on language of living on the inside and on the edge. Episcopal priest. Woman rabbi. It's about new skills and insights. The new Catholic Fundamentalist is the common theme of the oppression of women. Strong women.

### Themes

- Strong women - Everyone at our table benefited from the example of strong women. Many of them were the heart and soul of the churches where participants grew up.
- In a period of regression, which has caused real pain to people.
- That regression has been created by a longing for period that many of those calling for it did not live through.
- Holy Trinity and Jesuit Churches stand in opposition to that regression. This church and those like it are a serious source of hope.
- The document is unpersuasive and was called a work of fiction
- When it is so lacking in rigor, it begs the question of what is the motivation behind it: those include control, fear, thirst for power, insecurity, money.
- The Church suffers when it does not allow the gifts of half our population to be in positions of leadership.
- The future of the church was mentioned several times in that young people do not understand it and people at the table worried about the impact of regression.

## Table 2

*First Prompt: As you reflect on the role of women in ministry in the Catholic Church, what moves you? How was the spirit moving in you?*

- There are dark spirits moving in me; I feel disappointment, and it has caused me to question my sense of belonging in the Catholic Church (whether I am Catholic).
- My role exists despite the institutional church; I feel active and happy. I know this isn't common, and I feel blessed. I need to ignore a lot. It is important to be part of the community, rather than rebellious about our incomplete acceptance.
- We just aren't there yet. It's a process. I'm so proud of what Holy Trinity has done.
- As a lifelong Catholic, and a former Director of Faith Formation in Arlington, I feel at home here at Holy Trinity, and feel that my voice is heard. I love to hear women preach. My heart is here.
- I have three older sisters; they are grandmothers. My grandniece just asked me to baptize her baby. My role models are my mother and Phyllis Zagano. I met with Phyllis recently and asked her about her legacy. Phyllis sees nuances – she gives me hope. I want to honor her, as a way of preparing the next generation.
- In early 1960 I became conscious that women do not get the top job. In my first job, at a large corporation, I was asked to resolve a problem in my office concerning the treatment of women. I realized that the women needed better training. I have tended to be a responder rather than an initiator. After I reached my 80s, I got a masters degree at the Washington Theological Union. I love scripture.
- My two daughters are 25 and 28. They are trying to join Catholic communities in the places they live, San Francisco and Buffalo, respectively. I feel a sense of urgency – if we can't grow into a Catholic Church that recognizes the equality of women, we will lose a whole generation of people.
- After Vatican II, I felt that the permanent diaconate for women would happen. I feel disheartened now. It seemed like a reasonable step.

*Second prompt: Share what struck you most, or what resonated with you, and what moved you, during the time of silence.*

- I feel a sense of thanksgiving for my primary teachers, Sisters of the Precious Blood. They taught me what was important. I feel thanksgiving for this community;

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

although at an intellectual level I question, I am truly Catholic. I am in a sense of discernment.

- What resonated with me was: I am the fifth of six children. My mom went back to work when I was five, because my father couldn't support us. There was pushback from the parish. One of the nuns at school told me: your mom doesn't care about you, because she worked (outside the home). They didn't know about my dad. I believe the church is making the same mistake now. We know Jesus didn't distinguish between men and women, but the church does. It's frustrating. There's talk, but things don't change. Is there a place here for young women?
- I feel a sense of urgency. I was in college during Vatican II, and I thought we were moving forward, but now we are stuck. Women are so valuable in nurturing family, and want to be valuable for the church.
- My children don't feel at home in the church, not fully.
- I was struck by C. and her emotion, and K. and her daughters. My own daughter asks me how I can stay in the church. Women are the ones who bring stability and welcoming. We need to let women feel welcome.
- A sense of experience jumped out to me: urgency, desolation, and hope. Pope Leo has had a woman spiritual director. Cardinal McElroy is support of women in the diaconate. Thea Bowman taught the bishops to pray.
- I hear genuine concern for children; generationally. We want to be welcomed. Sex is a matter of biology, theology doesn't depend on biology.
- The sense of urgency is not only for the young. My daughter is 45 and wants nothing to do with the church. My 17-year-old granddaughter is more open.
- I am not personally called to the priesthood or the diaconate but I want the church to be open to it. I love being Catholic. One of my sisters is an atheist.
- This is a long process. I can't imagine that we will have women priests, but we should have deacons.
- I presided at a funeral. The decedent was Lutheran, but his wife was Catholic so she asked to have the funeral here, at Holy Trinity. I invited a Lutheran pastor from a nearby church to offer a homily, and she spoke so beautifully. I thought: What a loss for the Catholic church!
- My nieces have all left the church, but they are loving and good people.

*Third prompt: What moved you most deeply? What new insights arise? What are the common themes or fruits you have heard in the conversation?*

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- Hope, thankfulness and patience.
- I have heard both hope and frustration. I feel “Lord, it is so good to be here.” I am so thankful for Holy Trinity. We can do this! We can move forward knowing that everyone has gifts and all can be used.
- Sense of frustration and hope. In college, during Vatican II, we thought the church was moving forward. I live in Virginia, so I feel as if there are two church, which are very different. I feel distressed.
- Frustration. I have hope and fear, hope that we have another chance.
- I heard the need for women's voices. Need to have more women in ministry. We are called there.
- Vulnerability. Each person shared a vulnerability on this or other issues, That means trust. We share our stories, and that gives me hope.
- Hope and anger. There are women I know who felt called.
- I am hearing, not sure if it is right, that we are Christian before we are Catholic.
- Leadership in the church. Some Cardinals are being great leaders, and in a moment of real problems, the church is coming through, although this is off topic.
- When I heard that a Lutheran pastor had been invited to preach at a funeral, it reminded me that a person I know left the church because she feared her kids wouldn't be welcomed at her Catholic funeral, because they aren't catholic.
- I am gratified that women have a role in this parish.
- In other places, it is pray, pay and obey. Here is different, many people doing different things.
- Hope. We would like to have a Papal Bull issued that says women can be priests as well as men.

### **SUMMARY to share with the large group:**

- At our table we created a space of vulnerable sharing of feelings, and we generally stayed on the feeling level.
- We shared feelings of hurt, pain, frustration, confusion, sorrow and anger.
- Also urgency – we fear that young people, including our children and grandchildren, will not wait for the church to “get this right.”
- We feel deep loyalty toward the Catholic Church, and to the women, often religious sisters, who taught us the faith.
- But our prevailing feeling was hope – we understand that our church is undergoing a process, and we choose to have hope.

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- Finally, there is a feeling of deep gratitude for the parish of Holy Trinity, which people identified as a place where women's voices are heard, and women are seen in ministry

### Table 3

*Round 1: As you reflect on the “Role of Women in Ministry in the Church”, what moved you and how was the Spirit moving in you?*

- Conflicted, part of HT parish, catholic family, not ordained ministry; Jesus would not have excluded women; letter condescending, originally from Boston and angry about the sexual scandals and secrecy — ruined lives; know women called to be priest; daughter’s favorite class faith formation; we are not included.
- Principal of school; excited about being catholic; feel she is a leader in this church; voice heard —but only true to a point; don’t feel call to religious life but the diaconate — could see responding to a call; need leadership with authenticity. No one said we should do this in the past; Need to reopen and have a broader conversation — how to truly see the vision the ministry for women
- Tired of women doing so much of the work and not recognized/supported; saints with eating disorders — distorted versions of womanhood fed through saints; currently women’s role in the church is to do more and be quiet; Children not interested in the faith, “Mom, how can i be part of a church that does not respect me”.
- Negativity of the role of women in the church. Catholics HS and College — leaders were apparent and we were trained to be leaders.
- Work conducted by the Vatican uniquely characterized by lack of transparency both in process and outcome, condescending, and seems designed to maintain the status quo. Operationally, Catholic baptized women are treated as less able than men to interpret and live the faith, preach and lead others to the peace, justice and love of Christ. As a result my children have not felt welcome in the church. Historically and today, women’s role in the church is undervalued (e.g., not recorded, not communicated, miscommunicated, not included in the lectionary, under represented as saints/doctors of the church, women are barred from educational opportunities, barred from preaching, barred from decision making and barred from leadership), exploited (e.g., contributions widely not acknowledged, sexual exploitation permitted (with society and clergy), and not supported (e.g., agency and unique value of women — single, wives, mothers) and at time maligned (e.g., investigation of women religious)
- The role of deacon is not well defined and implemented

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

*Round 2: Share what struck you most or what resonated for you in the first round and what moved you during the time of silence.*

- In science, moved struck by my agitation, take it as still here; did not give up; first round gratitude, never fail to be impress with the dept and great of spirituality and work of women in the church;
- Struck by tired of this fight; so many times fell not brave; don't speak the truth when it needs to be spoken; women saints — fan or Ignatian/ Augustine able to make mistakes (worldly life first), but not women (competent, courageous, pure, perfect)
- Moved by others stories; admire so many women leaders; fight frustration because the church is not open to women all levels of leadership; children left church; own daughter sad but proud she took a stand - she made may be able to have a relationship with Jesus in another church.
- From San Francisco where there were 9 catholic schools then now 2. Women brought in the funding so the school still exists.
- Attended Catholic grammar, HS school and college. Witnessed women leadership; women religious leaders in schools, healthcare, excellent preachers and retreat leaders. Was docile until repeated sex standards that were covered up; exploitation of women religious; Vatican attack on women religious; my children do not feel at home in our church

*Round 3: Share what moved you most deeply. What new insights arise? What are the common themes or fruits of the conversations?*

#### **Common themes:**

- It's frustrating that so much talent is not being used; there is a feeling of sadness that women have no agency in the church or leadership roles. We were impressed by the contributions of women to the church. A person noted that he has participated in the March for Life for years and there is never a woman speaker on the podium. At Cardinal McElroy's installation, he noted there were no women on the altar - how could that be?
- Several pointed out that we did not think about this issue when we were younger but we are thinking about it now and young people today are not willing to be complacent. They are more willing to leave.

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- Question what are we doing wrong that only 22 responses receive on the issue of women deacons; do we need a different strategy (do we need a lobbies, do they need data; how can we be more strategic); the letter is so disrespectful — praying, fasting does not seem to be enough; what do women need to do to be seen
- Glad there are others not happy with the status quo and willing to speak out; many people feel abandoned and leave and the church leadership does not seem to care. There seems to be no new insights, same issues since Vatican 2 and now people want to go back to the Latin mass and veils (one parish has required veils for women). We can make changes in small communities, but does this effect the church internationally.

## Table 4

*Round 1- As you reflection the “Role of Women in Ministry” in the Church What moved you and how was the Spirit moving in you?*

- 1<sup>st</sup> minister being mother, brought back to Church after time away because Pope Francis & Pope Leo’s values – one of the original reasons for leaving = institutional loss of not having women in greater roles, feels it is important to re-engage on this issue
- Woman worthy to teach at micro level in home, but not at macro level = profound loss for the Church, even small children can ask “where are the women”,
- Experience of women ministers preaching/leading in Episcopalian spaces that influenced her perspective on faith growing up, disconnect experienced coming back to Catholic spaces where leadership = male,
- Growing up in Brooklyn, coming of age Vatican II made her feel empowered to have and express opinions, pope won’t be next to me when I meet God, discrimination against women in the Church akin to “another form” of racism
- Son + daughter in 50s, we’ve been able to treat them equally in everything except the Church, our daughter in law from Protestant tradition does not want to raise David’s grandchildren in the Church because of status of women, he understands but is sad he does not have his grandchildren with him in the Church
- Pre Vatican II experience in grade school, would “say Mass” as a child for a homebound relative, experienced what it did for the soul & felt a calling to priesthood

*Round 2- Share what struck you most or what resonated for you in the first round and what moved you during the time of silence*

- Wondering about international implications of re-examining the role of women as ordained ministries, works in international relations à Vatican = one of the places on an undesirable “list” of places that has categorically banned a female head of state
- Women’s callings are treated differently from men’s, profound sadness that this drives people from the Church, frustration with ignorance/covering up of women’s roles in Jesus’ ministry, no clear explanation for why Jesus would want this current status quo, also resonates with importance of “reforming institution from within”,

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

Church = flawed human institution, part of loving something = honesty about its imperfections, Church feels like home to me

- Clarify earlier point of racism (referring to hierarchical nature of Church), Paul's empowerment of women leaders in early Church, laments training of men entering priesthood that prohibits them from forming healthy relationships with person of any gender, explored other traditions but concludes it is better to try to find a way to live in the tradition you come from
- Struck by another person's telling of a calling they experienced to ministry and to another participant's recollection of mother as their first minister
- Concern Church is becoming tarnished over time by being too embedded in negative aspects of culture, rage that women are doing the legwork of training priests in Theology and Ministry and preaching but that there's an "invisible barrier" preventing women from doing these things themselves
- Feels solidarity, encouraged to work "within and against", in re-engaging realizes how important the Church is to her life and is reassured that so many women are pressing to have their calling recognized

### *Round 3 What are the common themes or fruits of the conversation?*

- Need to go somewhere else (other faith tradition) in order to be able to come back to the Catholic Church, saw an Episcopalian ordained woman preach at a Catholic mass in early 70s at invitation of a Georgetown preach,
- How we as mostly women at the table WANT to be involved in a spiritual and ministerial leadership capacity, thank God women want to still be here; how we draw strength from early accounts of women in great leadership in early Christianity- how do we amplify these voices?
- Common theme = disbelief in the agency of women to recognize the Spirit's calling, frustration that the Church doesn't believe that women's callings are from the Spirit/ need to be re-directed
- Catholic Church = home even though I'm frustrated with it, hopeful that we can build a Church more inclusive of women's voices because she sees evidence of women's voices becoming more prominent and real recognition by people of the

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

ministry women have done for them. Women's leadership is already present, it just has not been formalized/recognized by institution

- Experience of women not being treated well in other denominations
- Common theme = this is my spiritual home I'm not going to leave it, I'm going to fix it; draws inspiration from Hildegard of Bingen & women who have challenged the institution
- One word, Galileo

### Themes to present

- Frustration:
  - o lack of formal recognition of the ministry women already do, many people spoke about the first ministers in their lives being mothers & catechists, so this creates a real disconnect between their lived experience and the roles the Church closes off to women currently
  - o that when men say they have a calling it is taken seriously, but when women talk about the movement of the Spirit in their lives calling them to ministry and leadership it is dismissed or re-directed into subordinate roles the Church considers "appropriate" for women
  - o what this does to the reputation of the Church

## Table 5

- **Pain, confusion, anger expressed**
  - What is it going to take to get women into ministry?
  - Women are and have been doing the work of the Church and of general pastoral care (caring for sick, taking confessions, etc.)
  - The Gospel, God, Jesus constantly cite the equality and value of women (so many examples)
  - Women have always been here/there: In history, in the Church, in ministry
- **Personal pain**
  - Participants expressed personal pain about not being permitted to be priests
  - They felt a calling since childhood and were dismissed and called crazy
  - This is a horrible wound and burden and has affected them throughout their lives
- **Women do not just want to be Deacons**
  - Why are we fighting to be Deacons when we should be eligible for all positions?
  - It is demeaning
  - If women are permitted into the diaconate doesn't this just become another "female ghetto"?
  - Women want positions in the Church of authority and decision-making
- **Catholic is out of step with the world and society**
  - Other Christian denominations have women in leadership roles
  - The images of all men in outlandish garb are embarrassing and hearkens to royalty and another era
  - Women and young people are leaving the Church because of this outdated thinking and restrictions
- **Now is the time for radical change**

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- The Conference letter is discouraging but could offer a glimmer of hope
- No more incremental change and discussions. If not now, when?
- We have the numbers on our side of people who want change
- We are worried about incoming seminarians who may be conservative and want to take the Church backward
- **We envision a Catholic Church with women in positions of leadership and authority**
  - It would be different and freeing
  - It would be open and loving
  - The visuals are delightful!
- **Today's Listening Session format did not reflect how we like to communicate**
  - It felt constraining and patronizing like we could not have a discussion
  - Women are good with listening to each other and discussion
  - We like interaction and sharing

Table 6

Q 1: As you reflect on the "Role of Women in the Ministry of the Church," what moved you and how was the Spirit moving in you?

enjoy - men + women creators, not dependent from each other.  
- when a body of the Holy Spirit  
- Ministry of Men - not in church Post-holes of women's presence.

Men have over 1500 years - women

Remember Nye

Note - women in an issue - Significant "Soft Power" -  
Other - less + pleasant + flying like a - co-erky  
- Descent for values + but - what is what we want to do -  
and then power press  
Stress - evaluate for today's of past body  
Not center to be heard - solitary

At large what the process would be - Church not organized for  
change in long - steady changes - 200 years &

2 Share what struck you most or what resonated for you in the first round and what moved during the time of silence?

3 The issue of Pain -

As is many, I trust the spirit - some other feel pain

- a process - worth a decision at the end of the day

by process - not using of his grateful for you

- Specific things - as is.

4 'The Soul has no Sex'

Jesus had had people in my life who cared about the issue

if the things were away -

There is no process at work - in any relational way - so no posture

Q3: I have what moved you most deeply? What new insights arose? What are the common themes or fruits of the conversations

✓ - Common theme - decision to have women meaningfully involved in church  
pair - an indicator that there is restraint and movement

✓ - Wishes - how acting types - What is church - admissions <sup>and its bygone</sup>  
Wanted to happen to discharge their responsibilities under the gospel

✓ - Great to see this discussion happening -  
great care given to this process

- Happy to be in the process -  
faith in the process

- Every body is focused on - <sup>ORINATION -</sup> ordained people

→ Part of our <sup>manor</sup> shared problem & in pain +  
not listened to - could be by  
dialogue - role for women to discuss

- Brief of Forth -  
need to be specific  
- lot of granular

<sup>to have it</sup>  
"Karlota Pierly... - "I don't  
know men could have men's bodies  
- Can't have sexual but equal - it's not  
hard to just  
the spirit of law - from evangelism - helps -  
- value the women + roles

①

Summary

gratitude

1 - end of 9th month -  
- Men had over 1500 years ago  
- Women now have significant soft power

But just what is it that we are to do? think this out carefully  
Beautiful what you can do

- What would be the process to do by about Chh -  
in long standing history

Treat in the Spirit - The Holy Spirit is moving  
- Issue of pain - power for those feeling pain -

The Soul has no sex, SEX  
I don't think I had people in my life who could about this issue  
Common theme - ~~issues~~ has women many fully involved  
involved in the church.

Pain Pain - was indications that there is both restraint  
+ movement.

~~Thought~~ Was less - how well they help on -  
Phenomenon  
- What is - Chh - discussion of / or matters outside of  
- Chh -  
- Women + Men Need to discharge their responsibilities  
with the Gospel  
- Gratitude for this decision  
Happy to be in the process - faith in the process  
- Joyous for Ordination & Roles outside of or his  
part of our secular problem today is that  
many are in pain not listened to - a gap  
a gap potentially filled by new roles for women.

	(2)
	can't have separate but equal - <del>that's</del>
→	growing in <u>synodality</u> - ability to listen - it an important prelude to discerning how to expand increase of women's roles in church including ordained ones

Summary given orally by notetaker to large group:

- Profound sense of gratitude for this group discussion today.
- While men “took over” (*in the church*) 1500 years ago, women now, as previously have had, “significant soft power” that they exercise (*in the church and in living their faith*).
- The process is “going to take time”... given global scope of the church and differences of communities and cultures around the world.
- “Be careful what you wish for ...” Consider what the process would look like to bring about change...
- Trust in the Spirit—it’s moving.
- Admission of pain (*over status of women in the church*).
- “The soul has no sex” (*i.e., gender*).
- “I wish people in my life cared about this issue” (*that is, cared re: women’s status in the Catholic Church*).

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- Desire to have women “meaningfully” involved in the church.
- Unofficially ordained women (*raises the question*) “What is ‘church’?”
- Women and men need to discharge their responsibility under the Gospel.
- Focus on ordination yet there are ministry roles (*for women as for men*) outside ordination.
- Today many are in pain (*about the issues of women in ministry*) but are not listened to.
- Can’t have a “separate but equal” set up (*for men and women in the church*).
- Becoming a more synodal—that is, a listening church/People of God—might be the best preface/foundation for realizing a greater place of women in the church.

## Table 7

### *Round 1 Notes – Table 7:*

- I have childhood memories of hearing my Dad saying “there will be women priests soon.” I am sad that it didn’t happen.
- Though not Catholic, I have participated for 40 years with my spouse and children who are. We have supported women who want to have a greater role in the church. I see women preach in non-Catholic congregations. I’m curious about how ideas of priesthood might shift if women were allowed into this role.
- I have memories of my parents’ involvement in the church – there were examples of women helping with worship and reading. I was always very involved but was told “no women organists,” so decided to get more involved in changing this.
- I have been learning about the history of racism in the Catholic Church. It seems to me that similar historic prejudices shaped attitudes to women in ministry. Sexist attitudes should also be reformed.
- John Paul II considered making gender exclusion a matter of doctrine. Benedict convinced him it was a matter of law. This means that it is potentially changeable with sensitivity to those who may see the situation differently (i.e. church in Global South).
- As a member of our parish group “Women Who Stayed,” I studied the history of women in the church. I am concerned that Vatican leadership may not be sufficiently open to change under Pope Leo.
- Re-imagining the way we look at priests could be transformative for the church.
- Could the responsibilities of male priests be broadened to be shared with women?
- We should look at other parishes, like St. Vincent de Paul in Baltimore, to see how the Spirit has guided their practice of women in leadership.
- God is “in the change” – not rigid.

### *Round 2 Notes – Table 7:*

- I was struck by the idea that this “is just a law” and we need to allow for change and new life in our church.
- I was struck by the unanimity of frustration and disappointment with the current situation. I wish priests were more actively participating in this conversation.
- I feel like the Spirit is moving me to preach.

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- Women stayed with Christ when he was crucified. Where were his male followers? If Mary showed up today and offered to lead us in sacrament, would we stop her because she is a woman?
- If we talked about “people” instead of “women” and “men” this would not be an issue. I note how Pope Leo ended the debate on slavery after centuries of discussion. I hope he will also be bold on the discussion of women in ministry.
- Pope Leo has a chance to say “enough!” Women are fully capable of fulfilling these roles.
- The church should lead by example in cultures that perpetuate sexist attitudes.
- I was struck by the pain and loss expressed by women in the group.

### *Round 3 Notes – Table 7:*

- I am moved by the “commitment to change” at the table and to “continuing on the journey together.”
- I imagine a woman administering the sacraments and wonder “what really would be the loss?” Or instead, “what would be the transformation” that this could unleash?
- I wonder “what we can do to remove the roadblocks” that impede this change.
- I wonder what church leaders would do in a situation where no men were available to serve as priests. Would they ordain women in order to perpetuate the faith?
- I wonder “what men are signaling” to women by the roles they take in the church. Men should be willing to vary their own roles. The Amazon Synod signaled a desperate need for more priests. So why is this change so slow? What we are doing here today (at this meeting) is needed everywhere.
- We’ve seen women show the capability to provide pastoral care. Why are we resisting giving them more responsibility?
- The spirit in this group is willing to move ahead, but the structures aren’t. Hopefully this congregation can lead the process.

## Table 8

### Round 1.

- Sentiments of anger, cynicism, disapproval, frustration, outrage, being insulted, are all reaction so the document and the decision.
- Concern that the church may not survive with only males in this role and the priesthood.
- Other countries may not be as appalled at this as the US. Not open to women Deacons
- View that the logic of the document did not hold together. Particularly weak on the masculinity of Christ preventing women being deacons argument.
- “I get asked ‘How can you be part of a church without women?’”

### Round 2

- The pain, anger disappointment at a decision so poorly argued on such flimsy grounds. Don’t understand blocking from diaconate that does not lead to priesthood.
- Having to apologize for the church, particularly to young women. Concern for their turning away from Catholicism.
- This stance is harmful and we have to find a way of healing. Can’t see how we can heal until the decision changes.
- Want women at HT giving more homilies – at all masses.

### Round 3 – Themes

- *Anger, disappointment, etc.* “It is just not right and fair to prohibit women from diaconate.”
- *Impact on families:* Young people turning away from church; daughters in particular. What does this mean for the future of the church if future mothers are fed up with Church?
- *Lousy Rationale:* “The arguments in the document just don’t make sense, e.g. masculinity of Christ was a cultural thing. Today’s culture has a different view of women’s potential roles.”
- *Holy Trinity an Oasis:* People have tried other churches and just don’t have the same feeling of welcome and home. We have no formal barriers to women playing roles in ministry (but some glass ceilings exist). As good as our parish is, we have to strive to do better.

Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

Table Notes

- *Action:* We may not know how to influence Vatican decision makers. Individually we may write letters and have some avenues due to our connections. We should seek other groups who feel as we do and form coalitions to influence the Church hierarchy in US and abroad.

## Table 9

### *Round 1: what moved or stirred in you?*

- When the letter came out disappointed and saddened, even embarrassed by my church
- Lay reader, have a role—not called to priesthood and deaconhood; but a profound sense of disappointment for those who do
- Follow on theme: embarrassed; number of episcopalian friends, who are priests, just showered with ‘what’s wrong with the church...what’s so wrong’ and my answer is feeble: conservative, traditional, moves slowly...we are called to have free will and to speak up, and it is wrong, and the church has to change, and my question for me is what do I do.
- Jesus walking alongside us like the disciples who plucked grain on the sabbath; read the letter and was insulted; it was dismissive
- One of the seeming suggestions from the committee that we look for other roles for women in the church; I don’t see what else there is that they don’t already have, not just our parish but other churches, altar girls; women preaching; lectors for as long as I can remember, sacristans are allowed, seems farcical that we stop short of diaconate and say there are other things women can do; this committee so secretive all along, not surprising.
- Share the sentiments expressed; didn’t name the names on the committee, felt it was disappointing, if you are going to take a stand on something, put your name on it. Grew up in rigid traditional catholic church where nuns and priests weren’t nice; church needs to be welcoming, there are some factions that are so traditional, slam the door its done (women not in diaconate) synod is a hopeful situation; commission needs to hear from more people; try to be optimistic, maybe, maybe,
- Ever since coming to HT, two things got my attention: daily emails/videos; how phenomenal the women are, makes you sit up a little bit straighter in your own religion; at mass, when there is not a woman there, I think “F. [another person at the table] is going to go crazy”
- Read the article earlier this morning, read with dad, disappointed but not surprised; entire document doesn’t say anything new, here are some reasons not based in anything! but NO, there isn’t really any backing; just we’ve always done it this way, so that’s it. It is kind of annoying; grew up in miami, latin american, very conservative, frustrating that it is not changing as it should be.....

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- (I am trying not to respond; but I find I am nodding my head; is that okay??) Reading the letter and articles; asked to look back in history; didn't reflect on the signs of the times; can they not see that the churches are empty, we don't have enough priests; eucharist is so important. This little commission's work, they weren't paying attention to the signs of the times. I hope we at HT will pay more attention to the signs of the times.
- Frustrated and annoyed by this whole thing; want to study this; the more frustrated I get; cowardice; didn't release the names of the people on it....
- Can you sell your product? We aren't looking at what half the people are saying, and what some good men are saying. Our numbers are not good, they are falling away...it's at the core, the core is history..... I don't want to call it the patriarchy
- No good reason not to. The logic is: women cannot be ordained because only men can be ordained. It is a tautology.
- Sociologist-aware of the context of Jesus' life, of course he came as a man because rabbis were only men; nevertheless the church had women deacons; the letter is dismissive; don't know when the church will ever come out of that; have to understand the context of why Jesus was a man, they refuse to look at context, maybe they know better.
- So you think we have any hope?
- I hope so!
- My hope is that Pope Leo can take this and take it further; transmittal of letter was saying 'it is in your hands to make a decision here...' hope it isn't the end of it. We are rejecting the premise of your report; we don't think there is any reason why : deacon as ministry or sacramental ministry....
- How are decisions made in the church; pope doesn't appoint priests; seminarians of today are atomistic. If we don't have the priests on our side; things won't change easily.

### *Round 2: What moved you? What did you hear?*

- Grateful for this faith community I am part of; clear we are of one mind; its not like we are here to listen to someone with a different opinion; little practical thing: make sure there are always women on the altar, readers, EMs, when I see alot of men up there I say "this is not a good look," it doesn't reflect who we are as a church
- Many of the things that have happened are good men bringing women in; tapping Marcis, there are no women 'beadles..' how do we change, HT can change; what is the fear? Protestant reformation: we are going to break in two, Miami will go one

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

direction; would that be horrible? Anglican church/African break away seems to have been okay, maybe it is okay that

- Newer challenge of church: diversity; growth in church among conservative groups (Africa/Philippines); Latin America one of the more progressive; in synod this paragraph had the least yes votes; vatican reform communion in mouth or hand; countries were allowed to implement this on their own schedule. Canada before the US, perhaps it is a way to deal with diversity, not everyone has to follow the practice; allow some diversity
- Visibility of women; 9 am on live stream, it is a way to be more inclusive and to have people see it; amount of women on the altar can encourage those watching; should have women preaching at the streaming Mass.
- Kept thinking of Sophia (*a young woman at our table*) is the future of our church; her age and her gender; we seem to push away people rather than welcome; at Christmastime if you listen to a homily that makes no sense; half your audience doesn't usually come to mass, important to speak to them ...we will lose the youth!!
- Two things: (1) I am too stubborn to leave the church. People say why don't you become an episcopalian (2) good to see that educated people feel this way; in catholic church, a lot of scholarship about why we do things, theological backing; people are educated and are able to make logical conclusions; context is important; look at things contextual and not just in a vacuum.
- Funeral in Charlottesville in an episcopal church; it was like a Catholic mass, only difference: there were two women priests on the altar. What is wrong with this picture that we don't have this in our church.... What is wrong with us?? The notion of: Latin Mass is allowed to happen in certain places, so why can't ordained women be "allowed" we are the church; why do we have to be "allowed....?"
- I looked at the question at when has the church changed. The reasons are: we have always done it like that...changed when it made great errors: inquisition, crusades, Vatican II was a classic example; we aren't integrated into people of God, we have to do more. How do we have that happen again? Is the synodality the way, the push from the bottom; is it to have the pope say "synodality is pushing in that direction.."
- Church has a way when it makes a change—as the church has always believed, there is hope for reinterpretation.
- From a purely pragmatic standpoint in looking at the future; church needs to change for survival, if it wants to have the impact...keep looking at if the numbers are going down and we aren't welcoming everyone; we've had some shocking things happen,

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

we lost people because men abused women and children; when will we do something about that!

- If you take every single woman out of the church and out of the community, we have 7 guys over a certain age.... Would they even know that Jesus had risen if it had not been for a woman who told them to go to the tomb; maybe we need to strike as nurses sometimes strike.
- There is a shortage of priests; but then when they do have a priest, they send them somewhere else. I went to an all girls school, but the boys school had 7 priests who were alums. Well we don't have any of our alums who are priests.
- It does not make a ton of sense; we have created a problem... there are some who are opposed who say: if we let women be priests, what will the men do... even in miami, the nuns still do everything... if the priest was sick, the church would still run...
- Why does the change need to be universal? that resonated with me, why can't some locations ordain women?
- It is irrational not to have change
- I like the idea of striking!!!

### *Round 3: What are the Themes?*

- Strike would be fun....
- We are all in agreement about where we need to go
- Moved: grateful to be part of this parish; don't think I could walk out, I'd be walking out on my self, because this is my church.
- We all agree that something needs to be done; love the idea that Pope Leo put the letter out so people would say 'are you kidding me??' it is ridiculous
- Great image of one sunday all the women go to Martin's for a drink; (guys are great carrying the kids out). A Sunday when we have the press; members of parish are press; report on what would it be like if the women struck; quit
- Hoboken New Jersey; italian mass next; priest they had was from korea... churches around the country are from other countries; hard to understand the homily.
- Lutheran church in woodbridge VA, at a reception, former pastor- father of current pastor-when lutheran church opened up to women, women are the majority in the seminaries. Come back to the idea : don't see africa going this route, but in US/Canada/Latin American this could happen

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- What new insights? I am stuck on feeling marginalized as a result of what I read; they are stuck...will take me a while to get over that. Hopeful that I am here in this parish, starting to discuss this.
- Thrilled to be in this faith community; curious since Conclave was such a success; a wonder how many other faith communities have had discussions about the movie. For me, we are an unusual community here. As a female, I am very grateful.
- Annoyance; we want change; day at church without women! Let's film it; grateful for this community and found this church...not in miami, Africa would be okay; they would get over it.
- Second year out of college; don't know alot;
- In addition to a woman's walk out, would like Kevin to take this meeting to cardinal mcelroy; our parish had a model synodality gathering to consider that letter and the implications, letter was contrary to what came out of the synod; bring the results of the meeting to mcelroy. Don't want to just keep it here.
- In this parish: there is a lot of agreement; could go to Kevin and have him raise it at the next level. We are in a church that encourages talking to cardinal... cardinal mcelroy could make changes in our parish if we want him to. Could we ask him to make a women deacon?
- I could be L. [participant at the table]!
- No, I will wait for the priesthood : )
- Anger is a theme among people reading the letter, that was striking
- Book called Catholics in Crisis...about Holy Trinity; happened in the 90s, a man was protesting; highly recommend that book; current catholic would react better than the one that was cardinal then. Stood during the mass and wore the blue stole.
- Mary Magdalene: apostle to the apostles. Brought the good news to the guys.

**We had feelings:** anger, annoyance, frustration, insulted, disappointed, disheartened, embarrassed.

**We viewed the document:** as irrational, not based on any kind of good reasoning; dismissive, insulting, non-synodal; ignoring signs of the time, such as the emptying of churches and the damage the sex abuse crisis had on the church and how change is necessary; some of us agreed only with one thing: that it would be irrational to ordain women to the diaconate and not to the priesthood

**We are grateful for a parish:** where this conversation is happening; where there are almost always women on the altar; where there seems to be agreement; where we might have the ability to do something, not just in our parish but to have a broader impact. Some people are willing to not just put toe in water, but crash down the door. What about a strike, that the whole parish gets behind; that the press reports about. What community looks like without women. A hope that we bring this conversation to Cardinal McElroy;

**We think it might be a good sign that Pope Leo put this letter out:** maybe he is looking for people to respond and to hear the voice of the church in response to a ridiculous conclusion; the letter put it in his hands.

- Irrational
- Impractical
- Insulting
- Depressing
- Disheartening
- Disappointing
- Embarrassing

How can we move the church to change? Why didn't sex abuse crisis lead to more changes?

- Actions in our parish: women on altar; women strike; community
- But how to impact broader church: will synodality work?
- Didn't take signs of the times; not based on anything scripture; we've always
- Open ended letter: gives it back to Pope Leo; hope Pope Leo does something with this
- Some of us are prepared to crash down the door not just put a toe in the water.

## Table 10

*Q1 "Role of Women in Ministry in the Church", what moved you and how was the Spirit moving in you?*

- Why is this so difficult? Seems so easy to do.
- Many many strong women in our church – could do so much good
- Why no real explanation?
- Grew up with many women around the church I attended --- have never felt there shouldn't be women or that women were inferior
- With New Catholic nuns are much less restricted – doesn't make sense
- God created ALL in HIS image how much should physics really matter?
- Radical equality
- Women have been valued as educators in the church
- Church of Churches – clericalism. . .be aware of thoughts especially with different worldly cultures
- Awareness of what this culture is limiting – we are having huge shortages of Priests, etc does this make sense?

*Q2 Share what struck you most or what resonated for you in the first round and what moved you during the time of silence.*

- Bringing joy with us! Great men and women Lots of emotions with people --- what should be the qualifiers?
- Love the church's history – shortage of priests for YEARS. . .so sad the door still remains shut on Priests due to anatomy.
- Each of us is called to be holy – God is God
- How does the church help and make it easy?? Why don't they?
- Holy Order versus being able to participate – why not? More women preachers are in parishes every day
- Catholic church is acting much more like the Mormon church – classing people
- What is Ministry? What does the church support? HIDDEN Service of Women – not fair such a discrepancy
- This is a 20 year convo that is still going nowhere!
- Permanent Diaconate for Men – wasn't just a stepping stone it is a real position of worship in the church.
- Traditions can and should be broken
- Emotions on this topic are rising!
- Perhaps we need to continue to agitate from below. . .Pressurize this situation
- Where is any diversity in the church – so sad
- What happens in these sessions – they aren't transparent they aren't shared.

Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

Table Notes

*Q3 Share what moved you most deeply. What new insights arise? What are the common themes or fruits of the conversations?*

- Appreciate HT is like an island – we are feeling like Mary Magdalene who was misunderstood and still was Jesus' apostle – kept with him
- At least women at HT can participate in the homilies as a reflector –
- We should be talking about the negativity of clericalism
- Everyone of us needs support
- How can we support the Pope and his initiatives with all this going on – how about the numbers in the church? More men than women?
- Has anyone evaluated the efficacy of women in the church and its operations?
- We need more sessions like these with the hierarchy also in attendance
- We are grateful they are rethinking these things at all
- Need more transparency
- We have a lack of reorganization in the church. .
- Thank you for the opportunity to share and think this through a bit.

## Closing Comments via Post-It Notes

- Reading the document led me to discernment – patience and time. I need this community but struggle with the church at large. The document sparked an urgency – we are losing not just our younger generation but also many 60- and 70-year-olds. I am frustrated by the global church, and especially the American Catholic Church. I am thankful for the Holy Trinity community. The Holy Spirit came through with a fresh dose of grace for me today.
- Listening to our shared sorrow and sadness and our common vulnerabilities offers ways of trust being revealed. This experience seemed prompted and promoted by the Holy Spirit's presence. In sharing our vulnerable stories, we learn to hope together.
- Women must be in decision making roles such as “Cardinal.”
- Are young women leaving the church because they don't see a place for themselves?
- We need to hear women's voices. I am always asking where God wants me to be but am held back sometimes by gender. I feel like a second-class citizen. Let us look to the future!
- As we end, I am filled with frustration but also hope. Lord, it is so good to be here.
- Imagine a world where both women and men led the church together. The experiences, the understanding, and the leadership would be Divine. And God has no gender.
- Women really need to be heard. Women have always been the carriers of faith throughout history. Imagine what they could do if they were the leaders!
- If we ordain women without addressing/changing our hierarchical structures, we will have made little progress.
- Women around the world want full dignity and equality in the church. Sometimes we only hear from powerful male clerics in other countries who say they are not ready for women priests.
- We can't have separate but equal!
- Women should be able to preach – but more training is needed in homiletics. More women should learn how to preach.
- Jesus had no problem with women, from Mary Magdalene to the woman at the well. Why can't the church imitate Jesus in this regard?
- The document associates Jesus with masculinity. But God has no sexuality, so the document is not Christian!

## Holy Trinity - Women in Ministry in the Church

Listening Session January 24, 2026

### Table Notes

- Women are the bearers of faith throughout history. I hope that women will be ordained to a more formal role. So nice to be heard – really heard – by our clergy here.
- The times I have been to services presided over by women it felt different. Women have different issues than men. Their needs are different.
- Why not have women preach at Saturday vigil Masses or daily Masses?
- We need to make the work of the women in our church more visible.
- We are a tithing parish. We should put our money where our mouth is to support women studying divinity.
- Why can't we bring our recordings to the bishop and other nearby bishops?
- Women could strike on a Sunday with the support of the parish. Drop off the kids at church and then go to Vissy or Martins. Get the support of Cardinal McElroy.
- Priests at the parish level need courage to do what is right – speak truth with love.
- I encounter feelings of abandonment. Then I remember the hope – Jesus cried out with the same feeling. And then... the Resurrection.
- Perhaps the length of the fight for women's inclusion will result in a greater depth of change in the church.
- Hope and frustration are recurring themes here today. There is urgency. Women are fundamental to nurturing and would be a benefit to community and to the church as a whole. Permanent deacons should be women as well as men.
- I need to work harder and pray harder to see how we can move mountains to ordain female permanent deacons.
- Why have so many men as recorders at dialogues like this, and therefore have them summarizing the conversation and speaking for women?
- Women in the church -- the universal church – we're on the road but not recognized as equal. The church is missing a very important perspective by not recognizing women in ordained ministry.
- Hope for the future of women in the diaconate in the larger church.
- If we weren't here at Holy Trinity, I'm not sure we would be able to continue being part of practicing in the church.
- I am feeling gratitude for the recognition of women in many roles, leadership positions, and ministries here at Holy Trinity.
- I actually found the letter hopeful. It acknowledges the need to include women in leadership roles in the Church and has not yet closed the door on admitting women to the diaconate. A deeper exploration of the meaning of the diaconate and roles for women might awaken and animate the Church in new and amazing ways.