

The Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests Honors Pope Francis's Legacy of Inclusion and Justice

While we grieve his loss, we will continue the work of building a Church where all voices are heard, all vocations are honored, and no one is left behind.

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“

Pope Francis's greatest legacy is doing something new- offering blessings for divorced and remarried persons and LGBTQ, and opening the door to women deacons.”

Rev. Dr. Bridget Mary Meehan
ARCWP

joins Catholics and people of goodwill across the globe in mourning the passing of Pope Francis on April 21, 2025. We give thanks for his courageous leadership and compassionate heart, and for his transformative vision of a Synodal Church—a Church that listens, learns, and walks together with all, especially those on the margins.

Pope Francis was a shepherd of profound humility and Gospel-centered faithfulness. His papacy was marked by a deep commitment to the poor, to ecological justice, to interreligious dialogue, and to the full dignity of all

people—including LGBTQ+ Catholics, refugees, and those historically excluded from full participation in the Church. His historic encyclical *Laudato Si'* called the global community to care for our “common home” and inspired urgent ecological action rooted in a spirituality of kinship with creation.

Francis’s deep pastoral presence, his efforts to decentralize clerical power, and his emphasis on dialogue and mutual respect opened doors long closed in Church tradition. He embodied a theology of encounter—one that echoes the ministry of Jesus—drawing near to the wounded, the overlooked, and the oppressed.

As women priests serving inclusive Catholic communities across the world, we at ARCWP honor Pope Francis’s efforts to lead the Church toward justice, compassion, and reform. We share his longing for a Church that fully reflects the Gospel’s call to equality and welcome. While we grieve his loss, we also reaffirm our commitment to continuing the work he so boldly began: building a Church where all voices are heard, all vocations are honored, and no one is left behind.

Pope Francis was not only a pope for the Roman Catholic Church—he was a moral leader for humanity. Today, we mourn the passing of a good man—a prophet who, amid tremendous resistance, sought to steer the Church back to the radical love and inclusion at the heart of Jesus' message.

May Pope Francis now rejoice in the eternal embrace of the God he served with tenderness and truth. And may his legacy continue to inspire the global Church to rise, to reform, and to remember that the Church is always at its best when it is a Church for all.

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