

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Rome doesn't speak for all Catholics on the Ordination of Women

On November 1, All Saints Day, Pope Francis once again stated that the Roman Catholic Church's ban on the ordination of women is likely to endure. He approvingly cited John Paul II's insistence that the question of admitting women to Holy Orders is closed. Jesus's apostles, the pope said, were all men; therefore, all priests must be men.

The American National Catholic Church (ANCC) has always supported the ordination of women who feel called to Holy Orders. Just as Rome doesn't own the word "Catholic," neither does Rome speak for all Catholics, especially when it comes to questions about ordaining women, same-sex marriage, and polity, or church authority.

The New Testament attests to the fact that some of Jesus's closest followers were women. Mary Magdalene has traditionally been called the "apostle to the apostles," even by the Roman Church, because she was the first person to see the risen Christ and bring word to others. The letters of St. Paul and other ancient documents record the central role women played in the early Church. And experience in any number of Christian denominations with women priests and pastors testifies to the fact that they are wonderful shepherds of congregations.

The ANCC deeply regrets that the Vatican has once again iterated its traditional refusal to see that it is faith, dedication, and willingness to serve God in others, rather than gender, which are the prime qualities of priests and pastors. The ANCC also reaffirms its commitment to making sure that all persons called by God to a life of service can answer that call.

For more information on the ANCC's attitude to women's ordination, contact Fr. Kerry Walters, Vicar of Communications, at the above e-address and phone number.