

**Contact:**

Erin Hanna, Women's Ordination Conference, 202.675.1006

Eileen DiFranco, Roman Catholic Womenpriests-USA, 267.258.6966

Bridget Mary Meehan, Assoc. of Roman Catholic Woman Priests, 703.505.0004

Nicole Sotelo, Call To Action, 773.404.0004 x285

**For Immediate Release**

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

**Catholics Protest Nationwide during Holy Week in Support of Women Priests**  
Protests sparked by the recent threat to remove Fr. Roy Bourgeois from the priesthood  
due to his support for women's ordination

Twelve cities across the country will see Catholics holding protest vigils at Chrism masses during this Holy Week in support of women priests in the Catholic Church. The protests come in the wake of church officials threatening to remove a well-known Maryknoll priest and founder of School of the America's Watch, Fr. Roy Bourgeois, for his support of women's ordination.

Most of the vigils will take place outside of the local cathedral during the Chrism mass celebrations where the male priests gather with the bishop who blesses the oil use during Easter celebrations.

"As millions of Catholics across the country attend services this Holy Week, the majority of those attending are women, but not one priest leading the services will be a woman," said Jim FitzGerald, Executive Director of Call To Action. "It is deeply unjust that while women make up the majority of Catholic Church membership today, they are still forbidden to share their ministerial talents in the role of priest."

"Our supporters will gather this week in support of Fr. Roy, and as a reminder that while the male disciples denied and abandoned Jesus, women remained at the foot of the cross at the darkest hour," said Erin Hanna, Executive Director of Women's Ordination Conference. "Upon his resurrection, Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene, who was charged with carrying the word of God about the most important event in history – the resurrection of Christ. Yet today, women are not even allowed to preach on the altar."

"I admire Fr. Roy Bourgeois and the great work he has done as a Maryknoll priest for the past 38 years," says Patricia Fresen, a bishop within the Roman Catholic WomenPriests movement. "I have admired Maryknoll for standing behind Fr. Roy and I hope the Maryknoll community will continue to stand with him for justice. Regardless of the outcome, Fr. Roy will always be a priest of God."

A recent New York Times poll shows 60% of Catholics in the United States support women's ordination as priests and the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life shows that 39% of people who leave Catholicism do so over the way the Church treats women.

## **LIST OF PROTEST VIGILS**

### **Buffalo, NY**

Tuesday, April 19, 5:30PM  
St. Joseph's Cathedral  
50 Franklin St.  
Contact: Mike Toner 716.308.8666

### **Dallas, TX**

Tuesday, April 19, 6:30PM  
Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe  
2215 Ross Avenue  
Contact: Mary Jane Stevenson 214.457.3466

### **Columbus, OH**

Tuesday, April 19, 4:45PM  
Cathedral of St. Joseph,  
212 East Broad St.  
Contact: Tom Lupia 614.739.3756

### **Milwaukee, WI**

Tuesday, April 19, 7PM  
Cathedral of St John the Evangelist  
812 N Jackson  
Contact: [cta-wisconsin@charter.net](mailto:cta-wisconsin@charter.net)

### **Madison**

Tuesday, April 19, 7PM  
St Maria Goretti,  
5413 Flad Avenue  
Contact: Jim Green 608.669.2886

### **Chicago**

Tuesday April 19, 1:30PM  
Holy Name Cathedral  
730 N Wabash  
Contact: Bob Heineman 847.682.1056

### **Venice, FL**

Tuesday, April 19, 10AM  
Epiphany Cathedral,

350 Tampa Ave, West  
Contact: Michael Rigdon 941.486.1456

**Philadelphia, PA**

Thursday, April 21, 11:15AM  
Sister Cities Park across 18th St. from Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul  
Contact: Regina Bannan 215.545.9649

**Portland, ME**

Thursday, April 21  
Details to come  
Contact: Bill Slavick 207.773.6562

**Lansing**

Thursday, April 21, 9:30AM  
St Mary Cathedral  
219 Seymour St  
Contact: Karen Schrauben 517.285.1490

**Detroit**

Thursday, April 21, 10AM  
Blessed Sacrament  
9844 Woodward  
Contract: Jeanie Daly 248.933.4754

**St Petersburg**

Sunday April 24, Before and after 9:15 AM mass  
Cathedral of St Jude Apostle  
5815 5th Avenue N  
Contact: Katy Zatsick C 773.401.4012  
H 813.938.5750 [katyrcwp@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:katyrcwp@tampabay.rr.com)