



We Are Church

Pour une Eglise du Peuple de Dieu
Für eine Kirche des Gottesvolkes
Para una Iglesia del Pueblo de Dios
Para uma Igreja do Povo de Deus
Per una Chiesa del Popolo di Dio
For a Church of the People of God

Press Release

Vatican: No dialogue and no respect for Priest

Fr Tony Flannery and the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (C.D.F.)

25 September 2020. In 2012 Fr Tony Flannery was punished by the C.D.F. for publishing articles about the ordination of women, the priesthood and LGBTQ+ people. Since then he has been removed from public ministry. But with the appointment of Pope Francis dialogue on many of these issues is now widespread. So early in 2020 Fr Flannery appealed through his Redemptorist Order for him to be allowed to return to public ministry. The C.D.F. responded that they would agree a gradual admission to public ministry if Fr Flannery signed 4 statements on (1) No priestly ordination for women (2) Homosexual practices are contrary to natural law (3) No Same Sex Marriages (4) Gender theory is not accepted.

Earlier this week the Head of the C.D.F. Cardinal Ladaria said: "We did everything possible to dialogue with Father Flannery. It wasn't always easy. We did everything possible.we tried always to maintain our respect for Father Flannery."

"Not only have I not spoken to anyone at the C.D.F.," Father Flannery said, "at no stage did they ever communicate directly with me."

Cardinal Ladaria has a different understanding of what it means to "dialogue" which usually means talking directly to the person. And showing "respect" to Fr Flannery did not include informing him of the original C.D.F. investigation or allowing him to defend himself.

The very first Fr Flannery knew of the whole process was, in 2012, when he was presented with two documents, outlining his 'heretical' writings, and the sentence being imposed. His 'heretical' writings included the ordination of women and church teaching on LGBTQ+ people; issues that today are widely discussed at all levels in our church.

The processes used by the C.D.F. today remain the same as under Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI: Secret denunciations; secret trials; no opportunity for the accused to defend themselves; punishments harshly imposed. This is contrary to the gospel and an abuse of basic human rights. This is a scandal, which brings the church leadership into disrepute and is an obstacle to evangelisation.

We Are Church fully support Fr Flannery whose punishment by the C.D.F. has deprived our church of the ministry of a dedicated and much loved priest. The C.D.F. is not fit for purpose and urgently needs to be reformed.

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We Are Church International (WAC) founded in Rome in 1996, is a global coalition of national church reform groups. It is committed to the renewal of the Roman Catholic Church based on the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the theological spirit developed from it.