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Music director loses job over pro-woman quote

Maureen Fiedler | Jan. 27, 2010 NCR Today

Last Saturday, Jan. 23, the *Washington Post* ran an informative article about the quest for women's ordination in the Catholic church. The major photo featured Bridget Mary Meehan, one of the women bishops in the Roman Catholic Women Priests Movement. But the article was wide ranging, exploring many facets of the topic.

Sylvia Mulherin, 69, a former nun and music director at St. Leo's Parish in Fairfax, Va., was quoted as saying this: "Jesus was progressive in his treatment of women but, over time, men unjustly pushed women out. Maybe the women don't have to come in the back door, but we still have to sit in the pews."

The very next day, she was told to tender her resignation immediately!

In a message she sent to her choir members and colleagues, she said:
"My sole point is that I believe women have not achieved true equality in the Church and this fact deserves further consideration by the Church's leadership. This position is apparently unacceptable in the Diocese of Arlington."

I heard today from a parishioner who is appalled and saddened by this. His children were in her music class and loved her.

But me? I don't know whether to laugh or scream. On the face of it, this firing is so ridiculous, it could make late night comedy. On the other hand, it documents a deepening atmosphere of repression in our church.

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