

[Opinion](#)

[News](#)

[Spirituality](#)



Benedictine Sr. Joan Chittister and former NCR editor Tom Roberts record the podcast "Risking the Questions." (Benetvision/Jacqueline Small)



Tom Roberts

[View Author Profile](#)

troberts@ncronline.org



Joan Chittister

[View Author Profile](#)

Follow on Twitter at [@joanchittister](#)



John Grosso

[View Author Profile](#)

[**Join the Conversation**](#)

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. [Learn more](#)

October 23, 2024

[Share on Bluesky](#)[Share on Facebook](#)[Share on Twitter](#)[Email to a friend](#)[Print](#)

Benedictine Sr. [Joan Chittister](#) has a well-earned reputation as one who dares to ask big, bold questions — of civil and church authorities, of long-held assumptions about women and their place in the church and the wider world, about religious life, about the church itself.

This first episode in her new podcast, "Risking the Questions," fittingly explores her book [Called to Question: A Spiritual Memoir](#), a detailed exploration of one of the important arcs of change she experienced in religious life.

A joint project of [Benetvision](#) and NCR, "Risking the Questions" invites you into conversations that most of us only have in our own minds. Chittister — whose courageous and surprising spiritual insights come from 70 years as a Benedictine sister — and her friend and [biographer](#), former National Catholic Reporter editor Tom

Roberts, discuss deep and universal topics in this series.

In episode two, Chittister and Roberts explore the impact of the Second Vatican Council on religious orders, focusing particularly on the council's direction to religious orders "to go back to their founder, decide what you were founded for, what you were doing now and what was needed now."

The result was a deep examination of purpose, of history and how the wisdom and practice of centuries applied to contemporary life. The changes that began in the mid-1960s have picked up pace during the Francis papacy. In this episode, Chittister speaks of synodality and says, "I'm so glad I lived for this moment, and I'm watching this with happy tears in my eyes."

This podcast has been made possible in part by the generosity of Bill and Jeanne Buchanan.

How to Listen

Click the "play" button inside this article to start the show. Make sure to keep the window open on your browser if you're doing other things, or the audio will stop.

From your mobile device:

You can listen and subscribe to "Risking the Questions" from any podcast app. If you're reading this from an iPhone or other Apple mobile device, [tap this link](#) to listen in Apple Podcasts. The podcast is also available on Spotify, [at this link](#).

If you prefer another podcast app, you can find "Risking the Questions" there.

Advertisement

This story appears in the **Risking the Questions** feature series. [View the full series.](#)