



Sisters in Crisis: Revisited: From Unraveling to Reform and Renewal

Ann Carey

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Fifty years ago, nearly 200,000 religious sisters worked in Catholic schools, hospitals and other institutions throughout the United States. American Catholics honored these women of faith who founded and built these flourishing works of mercy.

Then came the ideological shifts and moral upheavals of the 1960s, and ever since, most women's orders in the United States have been in a state of crisis. Now the sisters are aging, with fewer and fewer younger women to take their place. Perhaps related to this demographic shift is the continuing doctrinal confusion that has come under the scrutiny of the Vatican.

Using the archival records of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and other prominent groups of sisters, journalist and author Ann Carey shows how feminist activists unraveled American women's religious communities from their leadership positions in national organizations and large congregations. She also explains the recent and necessary interventions by the Vatican.

After examining the many forces that have contributed to the crisis, Carey reports on a promising sign of renewal in American religious life: the growing number of young women attracted to older communities that have retained their identity and newly formed, yet traditional, congregations.

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