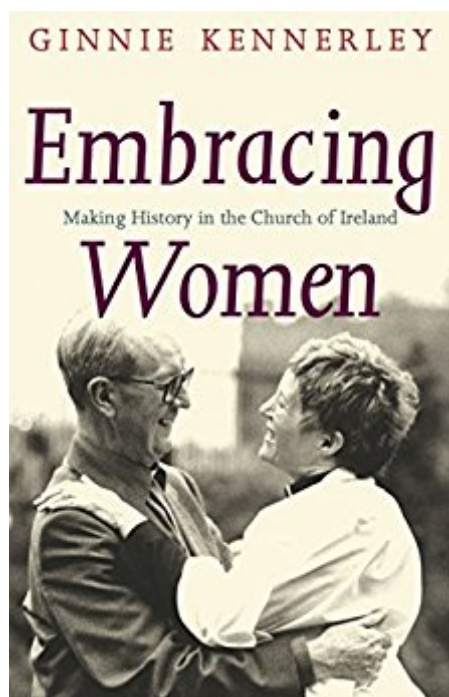


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Embracing Women: Making History In The Church Of Ireland



Synopsis

The title *Embracing Women* is inspired by the striking photograph of the author, Canon Ginnie Kennerley, exchanging an embrace with a well-known Catholic priest after her ordination in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin. This book traces the story of the development of women's ordained ministry in the Church of Ireland from 1976 to the present day – a period in which all involved in the issue were aware of Making History in the Church of Ireland. It offers a story both of personal pilgrimage and of ecclesial development, as the author describes her own journey alongside the dialogue of groups and individuals within the church. The Church of Ireland voted to ordain women as priests and, if elected, as bishops back in 1990, two years before the Church of England voted to do so, and nearly two decades after the first Anglican women were ordained in Hong Kong. There were many twists and turns, and a good deal of pain, in the fourteen years it took to move from the church's decision that there was "no theological objection" to its vote to go ahead with ordinations; but the decision caused no split in the church.

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Customer Reviews

This book is a reminder that we should not take for granted the gifts we enjoy when women are at the altar. It has not always been thus. Ginnie Kennerley's new book is a first hand account of the theological and political battles fought not long ago by tenacious and brilliant women and the men who supported them. While I don't particularly care for the title and its connotations, what resides within the covers of this book is quite wonderful. Reading it is like sitting in front of a peat fire with a friend who tells a compelling story of her journey from religious ambivalence to the center of a religious storm. A challenging marriage and later the terminal illness of her husband made the author aware that a spiritual dimension was missing in her life. As a journalist, she began to specialize in reporting on the changing world of organized religion where women were urging, nudging, raising theological arguments in favor of the full inclusion of women in the hundreds-of-years-old all-male club. Soon the author found herself attending a local parish church where I envisage her moving from the back pews to the center of a supportive prayer community. Following her husband's death, she energetically pursued formal theological education and became a teacher herself. Not long into her spiritual quest, the author found herself in the thick of the contentious debate. Is God continuing to reveal God's self in the full inclusion of women at the altar and in church hierarchy? Her journey from journalist to deacon, priest, rector and cathedral canon is sometimes humorous (should women clergy, oh my, wear a clerical collar with a trouser suit?)

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