



# THE BIRTH OF CATHOLIC WOMEN PROFESSIONALS

Article and headshot by Lilia Grundy

**T**he day was quickly approaching, and I was feeling the excitement – perhaps my family could see my giddiness as I checked off another day on the calendar. I was about to begin my first parish small group and I couldn't wait to meet the other members who would be joining me. Surprisingly, just a few months earlier I proclaimed I was ready to leave the church. What changed?

My twins reminded me of the incident actually – I had forgotten all about the moment. “We overheard you speaking to Daddy” they said. “You were crying.” Oh oh, I think, this can't be good. I further wait to hear what in fact I was crying about. “You said you were missing something Mommy...that you felt like something was missing in your life, but you didn't know what.” It all came back to me. They were right, I had been on this quest to find something to fill the void I was feeling but couldn't quite put my finger on it.

In the midst of the pandemic, when we were dealing with loss, social distancing had become a part of life and all the world seemed to come to a halt. I had been working to increase my faith but then, all churches were shortly shut down and I

never had the chance to make it to Mass that Lent.

To heighten the frustration, I had become more anxious – about the world, the deadly virus and politics. All television and radio seemed to preach doom and finally one day after watching bishops speaking about politics on the news, I reached my limit. I turned to my husband and cried out, “That's it! I'm done! I'm done with the church!”

Things get blurry after that moment, but all I can say is that by the grace of God, I certainly did not leave the Catholic Church. My family and I began to go to Mass as parishes were slowly given permission to re-open. We started attending a new parish because I was not content with simply attending Mass on a bi-weekend

basis. I initiated an online search to find a local parish that was offering Mass every week – and we found one!

When the Parish pastor spoke during homilies, his words touched my heart like never before – he made me curious about my faith. And while I was a cradle Catholic, I had never consumed the faith. I now know that it was meant to be - God was guiding my family and I to this church for a reason.

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Fast forward to January 2021 – I start *Magnify* (a book written by Kaylene Brown containing reflections on virtues specifically for women) along with my new parish. Our pastor was encouraging both women and men to sign up (the men were challenged to do Exodus 90). After reviewing some of the spiritual disciplines I would be having to do for ninety days I thought, “There’s no way I can do this!” My mind kept telling me that I wouldn’t be successful, but my heart was pushing me to try. Before I could convince myself NO, my hands submitted the interest form. Easter Sunday arrives and I am so happy. I can’t wait to attend Mass. I am proud to have completed the *Magnify* program, and I am transformed.

There are too many blessings to count as a result of participating in *Magnify*. The biggest inspiration, however, was realizing the shared hunger to connect with other Catholic women during our group’s weekly accountability check-in. In particular, I recognized that there was a desire among us fellow, working-women to be able to share our faith in the workplace. The missing feeling I was experiencing just less than a year prior was now replaced with a mission to find other women who were feeling the same.

I couldn’t ignore the floating thoughts any longer – I decided to put together a plan to launch Catholic Women Professionals (CWP). I built the website and social media

groups (my marketing background and skills sure came in handy) and reached out to the small number of women I had met through my new parish. By word of mouth, we hosted an intimate, in-person gathering, and with exchange of emails, I distributed CWP’s first E-newsletter.

It is inspiring to see the growing interest (not just locally, but around the globe). More importantly, this new ministry – reaching out to other women in the corporate world to grow our faith, fills me with hope. Hope that we don’t need to be alone. Hope that we don’t need to feel like something is missing. Hope that we have something so amazing waiting for us at the end of this earthly journey.

All Catholic women are invited to learn more about CWP by visiting [catholicwomenprofessionals.com](http://catholicwomenprofessionals.com). CWP host virtual meetups monthly on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6pm (PST) via Zoom.



*Lilia Grundy is University of Portland's Pamplin School of Business' Director of Corporate Partnerships with over 20 years of corporate experience (including Kraft Foods, NBC Television, and Telemundo). Lilia launched Catholic Women Professionals to inspire other working women to grow their faith. She is married to her high school sweetie Rob - they have beautiful twin girls who love art, music and learning about the Saints;*

## PRAYER OF THE MONTH



### POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER TO *Mary, Undoer of Knots*

Holy Mary, full of God’s presence during the day of your life, you accepted with full humility the Father’s will, and the devil was never capable of tying you up with his confusion.

Once with your Son you interceded for our difficulties, and full of kindness and patience, you gave us an example of how to untie the knots in our life.

By remaining forever Our Mother, you put in order and make more clear the ties that link us to the Lord.

Holy Mother, Mother of God and our Mother, to you who untie with a motherly heart the knots of our life, we pray to you to receive in your hands (the name of the person), and to free him/her of the knots and confusion with which our enemy attacks.

Through your grace, your intercession and your example deliver us from all evil, Our Lady, and untie the knots that prevent us from being united with God, so that we, free from sin and error, may find Him in all things, may have our hearts placed in Him, and may serve Him always in our brothers and sisters. Amen.

