



**The ordination of women as priests and bishops has been accepted through most of the world-wide Anglican communion.**

But what of Sydney Diocese? Can we detect any progress towards the ordination of women as presbyters here?

The Movement for the Ordination of Women has been advocating for women in ordained ministry for four decades. And there have been changes over that time that encourage us to keep hoping.

*THEN:* There was civil litigation to prohibit the ordination of women as priests in some Australian Dioceses

**NOW:** There is no legal objection to the recognition of women ordained as priests or bishops in Australia.

*THEN:* There was publicly declared and documented impaired fellowship with Australian Dioceses that ordained women

**NOW:** Fellowship between the Diocese of Sydney and any Diocese in Australia (or elsewhere) that authorises the ordination of women priests is no longer impaired. *Three Archbishops of Sydney, as Metropolitans, have authorised the consecration of five women bishops in the Dioceses of Grafton, Newcastle and Canberra & Goulburn, have appointed consecrating bishops from the Province and been represented at those consecrations by bishops from the Province.*

*THEN:* Biblical authority as determined by the Doctrine Commission was seen as excluding the ordination of women as priests everywhere

**NOW:** Differences in practice on this matter are celebrated as an example of 'God-given diversity' (The Jerusalem Declaration).

*THEN:* Women seeking ordination were often dismissed as feminists claiming the right to ordination as a matter of gender equality in employment

**NOW:** It is recognised that it is God who calls and gifts deacons, priests and bishops (Jerusalem Declaration).

*THEN:* There was no evidence as to the impact of women deacons, priests and bishops on proclamation of the Gospel

**NOW:** We see the great and glorious ministry of women, and the contribution inherent in their humanity, in every aspect of our mission to the community here and worldwide.

The changes between *THEN* and **NOW** are manifold. They encourage us to ask: *might we yet see women priests ordained and bishops consecrated in the Sydney Diocese?*

**Join with us, the Movement for the Ordination of Women, and pray for continuing progress toward ordination of women as priests in the Diocese of Sydney: <https://mowatch.com.au/>**

**And celebrate women's ministry at the MOW national conference, *Lead Like a Woman*, Brisbane 28-30 November 2024: <https://mowatch.com.au/conferences/2024-conference-lead-like-a-woman/>**

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**The Movement for the Ordination of Women Celebrates Thirteen Women Bishops**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_women\\_bishops\\_in\\_the\\_Anglican\\_Church\\_of\\_Australia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_women_bishops_in_the_Anglican_Church_of_Australia)

With the consecration of three women bishops in three months, it's timely to consider how we Sydney Anglicans are denied experience of their gifts and talents. Why do women have to leave Sydney to answer their calling to faithfully proclaim God's word and protect and serve the people of God? How is it that these women, as chief ministers and pastors, can promote the mission of the Church in the world, but not in Sydney?

**Archbishop Kay Goldsworthy AO.** Born in Melbourne, studied at Trinity College. Consecrated 2008 as Assistant Bishop of Perth; Bishop of Gippsland 2015; Archbishop of Perth, 2018.

**Bishop Barbara Darling** (1947-2015). Born in Sydney, studied at Ridley College. Consecrated 2008 as Bishop for Diocesan Ministries, Melbourne. Bishop of the Eastern Region, Melbourne 2009 -2014.

**Bishop Genieve Blackwell.** Born in Western Australia, studied at Moore Theological College, ordained Deacon in Sydney 1993. Consecrated 2012 in Newcastle for Canberra & Goulburn. Assistant Bishop of Melbourne since 2015.

**Bishop Alison Taylor AM.** Studied at Trinity College. Consecrated 2013 as Bishop Southern Region, Brisbane, until retirement in 2018.

**Bishop Sarah Macneil.** Born Canberra, studied at St Mark's. Consecrated 2014 as Bishop of Grafton until retirement in 2018.

**Bishop Kate Wilmot.** Born Darwin, studied at Murdoch University. Consecrated 2015 as Assistant Bishop, Perth.

**Bishop Sonia Roulston.** Grew up in East Maitland, studied at St John's College, Morpeth. Consecrated 2018 as Assistant Bishop, Inland Episcopate, Newcastle.

**Bishop Kate Prowd.** Studied at Trinity College. Consecrated 2018 as Assistant Bishop, Melbourne.

**Bishop Denise Ferguson.** Born New Zealand, studied Auckland and Otago Universities. Consecrated 2019 as Assistant Bishop, Adelaide until retirement 2024.

**Bishop Carol Wagner.** Born South Africa, studied at St Mark's. Consecrated 2020 as Assistant Bishop, Canberra & Goulburn until retirement in 2024.

**Bishop Sarah Plowman.** Raised in Nambour, studied St Francis College. Consecrated 2024 as Assistant Bishop and Bishop for the Northern Region, Brisbane.

**Bishop Sophie Relf-Christoper.** Born in London, consecrated 2024 as Assistant Bishop, Adelaide.

**Bishop Vanessa Bennett.** Studied Morling College. Deaconed in Sydney in 2003. Consecrated 2024 as Assistant Bishop, Canberra & Goulburn.



*Sydney women: Bishop Vanessa Bennett, The Ven. Dr Colleen O'Reilly AM, Bishop Genieve Blackwell*