



PRINT | DIGITAL | AUDIO | VIDEO | EVENTS

2021 IMPACT REPORT

# America



## 2021: A YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION AND HOPE

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Dear Friends:

When John Wynne, S.J., opened the first office of **America** in 1909, he had a simple yet daring vision: to create a media ministry that would give Catholics a voice in the public debate of the United States. That's why he called it **America**. Over the course of a Great Depression, two world wars, eight papacies, twenty presidencies, and countless more events in the church and the world, **America** became one of the most celebrated Catholic journals in the English-speaking world.

Yet like all legacy media, **America** was profoundly affected by the challenge of the digital revolution. By 2012, the church and the world had changed dramatically and it was clear that America Media had to change too. So the America Media team set out to turn a weekly print magazine into a multi-platform, digital-first media organization, which would lead the conversation about faith and culture in the 21st century.

The goal was not to save a magazine, but to build a new media company around a powerful brand and charism. The challenge was enormous. We had to transform the content, the means of acquiring it, and the means of accessing it in ways that would meet the needs of our audience. Above all, we needed people with the smarts to know what they didn't know; who could learn on their feet in what had become a 100-year old start up. Lastly, we had to find a way to pay for those investments, to generate the earned revenue and philanthropy needed to support our operations. It took every day of ten years, an amazing team, plus the grace of God to get here.

As this Impact Report makes clear, **America's** digital platforms now publish news and analysis multiple times per day. In addition, **America** produces award-winning podcasts, video reports and daily newsletters.

Thank you for your support. You are the reason we have labored so long and with such dedication. **America is more than a media organization. We are a community, a ministry of the church. For you. For the greater glory of God.**

**Sincerely yours in Christ,**  
Matthew F. Malone, S.J.

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**America**

Catholics: Don't be afraid to engage with controversial ideas (even Critical Race Theory)

Cherita Parks

Do you see the need for more... On the one hand, we've seen... He responded not only with these challenges... looking for solving these problems, many of... suggest here we can continue to work...



A FELLOWSHIP IN NEWARK

How a Benedictine school discovered its mission by staying put

Stephen C. Adalberto

PLUS: My Two Years at Richard Heil's Living School

Should Catholic Schools Teach Critical Race Theory?

James Martin on 9/11 and the Commemoration

END OF THE PATRIARCHY?

Women are taking on positions of power at the Vatican. Will they change the patriarchy forever?

By Colleen Dulle

When Nathalie Beccari, a member of the Congregation of Xaverians, was appointed the first woman undersecretary of the Synod of Bishops, she voiced an observation that made headlines around the world. In a press conference at the Vatican, she told reporters her appointment was evidence that "the patriarchal mindset [of the church] is changing." Is it true? Pope Francis has appointed women to positions of greater authority than any previous pontiff, but the Vatican remains a largely male-dominated space that, because it must be controlled by an ordained bishop, places a definite restriction on the heights to which women can aspire—a limit some have termed a "stained-glass ceiling." Under that stained-glass ceiling, though, women are gaining ground. In 2019, 24 percent of employees at the Holy See were women, compared with 17.6 percent in 2010, continuing a gradual increase that began in earnest after the Second Vatican Council. The women working in the Vatican mostly hold behind-the-scenes positions running the day-to-day operations of the many dicasteries, Roman Curia and the

America

THE END OF ORDINARY TIME

Nothing will change the church more profoundly than climate change

Meet the Millennial Nuns | Martyr Meehan on Politics in the Post-Truth Era | The Supply Chain Crisis Could Save Christmas

America

THE RISING

Can a new group of women leaders change the Vatican?

Colleen Dulle | SPECIAL ISSUE ON WOMEN IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH | Kate Ward: Child Care and Catholic Social Teaching | Lucetta Scaraffia and Anna Remba: Gender and the Priesthood | Greer Hansman: Let's Talk About Women's Health

A LOOK AT THE LINGERING HARM OF THE SEXUAL ABUSE CRISIS

Nearly three years after a sweeping report by the U.S. bishops' commission on the sexual abuse crisis, the Catholic Church in the United States is still reeling from the fallout. The commission's report, "The Pastoral Response to the Sexual Abuse Crisis," was published in 2019 and called for a "pastoral response" to the crisis. It also called for a "pastoral response" to the crisis. It also called for a "pastoral response" to the crisis. It also called for a "pastoral response" to the crisis.

What do you consider to be the main challenge to the faith of Catholics today?

- Isn't it true? 20%
Catholicism/abstinence/priests not allowed to marry 22%
Church leadership decisions/abuse/sexual abuse 18%
Bad priests 15%
Homosexual practices 9%
Teaching priests too much, leaving children alone with them 3%
Other 19%

Do you think the church is doing enough to address the sexual abuse crisis?

- Yes 20%
No 70%

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No 70%

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2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- 70,000 magazine readers
12,000 digital subscribers
1,100,000 unique monthly users
175,000 newsletter subscribers
1,125,000 social media followers
250,000 podcast downloads a month
54,000 YouTube subscribers

PARTNERS

- 236 advertisers

NEWSROOM

- 87,000 mentions in the secular and religious press (editorial and social media)

2021: A LOOK BACK THE GREATEST TRANSFORMATION OF OUR MINISTRY SINCE OUR FOUNDING IN 1909

On January 6, America Media arrived at a critical milestone in its 112-year history: the launch of a new digital subscription model. This move represented the culmination of eight years of work during which we moved to a digital-first strategy and engaged our readers beyond print, reaching people through audio, video, social media and live events.

A SMART, CATHOLIC TAKE ON THE NEWS AND THE WORLD

America Media continued to provide in-depth news and analysis of current events at the intersection of the church and the world—telling the stories that matter most to you. Our team led the conversation with fearlessness, intelligence and charity, helping our readers reflect in the midst of a constantly changing news cycle. While platforms change, our mission remains the same: to help our community encounter God in all things.

Here are some highlights from the past year.

We fostered real, charitable and informed debate on a number of polarizing topics in our new editorial feature The Conversation.

While the U.S. bishops were preparing to take up the question of the Eucharist and American politics, America published a range of voices on the topic, including two U.S. bishops:

- "Bishop McElroy: The Eucharist is being weaponized for political ends. This must not happen."
Archbishop Aquila also weighed in, writing, "For the church to live in eucharistic coherence, we must be willing to challenge Catholics persisting in grave sin."



CLICK BLUE TEXT TO READ FULL ARTICLE >>>



We asked two scholars to consider the question of women’s ordination. Julia Brumbaugh reminded readers that the debate over women’s ordination had to be considered [alongside the church’s history with sexism](#), and Lucetta Scaraffia made the case for [including women in the College of Cardinals](#).

It was a busy year for Vatican news, and our Vatican correspondent, Gerard O’Connell, was on the front lines, asking [Pope Francis if he had ever personally denied Communion to anyone](#), interviewing [Cardinal Scola about attacks against Pope Francis](#) and covering [President Joe Biden’s visit to the Vatican](#).

We highlighted both the great hope and the great need for healing in the church. We delved into crucial topics that are not always easy to discuss but are crucial to understanding the struggles and joys of today’s Catholics. These stories included:

- [Colleen Dulle’s report on women rising to new heights at the Vatican](#).
- Grant Kaplan’s essay on [the crisis in Catholic theology](#).
- Eve Tushnet’s story on the [dangers of conversion therapy](#) in the church
- and Simcha Fisher’s look at one couple’s experience of [seeking an annulment](#).

We worked to help our community process the major news stories of the day through the personal experience of individual Catholics, and we tried to help make the everyday experiences in our church more meaningful.



**RENÉE RODEN**  
@ReNEIGHimahorse



**JIM McDERMOTT, S.J.**  
Jim McDermott, S.J., is an associate editor at America.  
@PopCulturPriest



**FR. BRUCE WILKINSON**  
@PadreInAtlanta

- Zac Davis wrote about his [love of the Latin Mass](#), and why he understood the need for Pope Francis’ new restrictions.
- Renée Roden tackled [abortion and the patriarchy](#).
- Jim McDermott, S.J., offered [tips for preaching better homilies](#) and advice for [talking about sex in the confessional](#).
- And Father Bruce Wilkinson wrote about being [kicked out of the seminary for being “too Black”](#)—and why he stayed in the church anyway.
- Most recently, we sent out [daily Advent reflections](#) to accompany you for the coming of our savior’s birth.

## AUDIO & VIDEO

Capitalizing on previous successes, we expanded our audio and video products.

- “Jesuitical” recorded its 200th episode and along the way spoke with the modern spiritual giants [Richard Rohr](#), O.F.M., and [Greg Boyle](#), S.J., and heard from [Casey Stanton](#), a woman who feels called to be a deacon in the Catholic Church.
- On “Inside the Vatican,” we began doing more documentary-style deep-dive episodes on topics of broad interest, including: [What you need to know about the Communion Wars in the U.S. Church](#) and [The German Synodal Path, Explained](#).
- We launched two new podcasts: “[The Gloria Purvis Podcast](#),” which tackles complex issues in an honest and charitable way, including issues around racism; and “[Hark! The Stories Behind Our Favorite Christmas Carols](#),” a limited-run series for Advent, which explores the meaning and making of the most beloved Christmas hymns.
- In video, some of our most impressive pieces were a documentary on [a woman who runs her Catholic parish](#), an explainer about [the restrictions on the Latin Mass](#) and an interview about why [Pope Francis was visiting Iraq](#).

## SOCIAL MEDIA

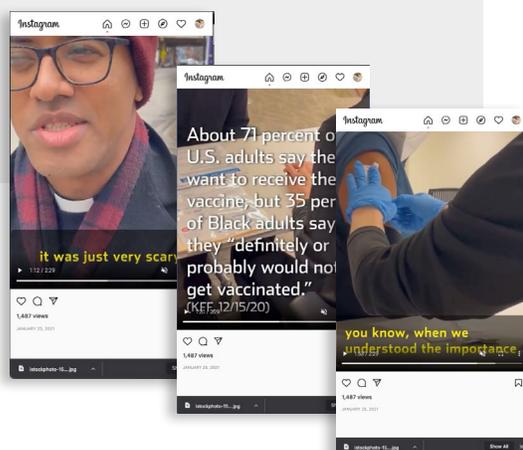
We evaluated our presence on social media and developed a strategy that capitalized on each platform’s unique audience to bring the most relevant content to our followers. Our audiences on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram grew in size and in active engagement. In addition to directing social media followers to the print and multimedia content on our site, our social media platforms now bring our followers even more:

- A front-row seat to livestream events, from panels to prayer services to tours of our headquarters in New York City.
- Video reporting from our staff on topics most relevant to our audience. For example, [national correspondent Michael O’Loughlin followed a young priest in Chicago as he got his Covid-19 vaccine in 2021](#).
- The latest Pope Francis coverage. From [his statements to reporters about the Communion wars](#) to [his meeting with President Biden](#), our followers heard the pope’s words for themselves on Instagram and Twitter.
- Daily headlines that capture the most talked-about news in the church and beyond. Our audience got updates and soundbites from [the Vatican](#), [groundbreaking court cases](#) and [the Met Gala](#).



**Ashley McKinless**  
Executive Editor

**Zac Davis**  
Associate Editor and Director  
of Audience Engagement





## SUPPORT

Without the generous support of our subscribers—a community of the most loyal readers in the Catholic press—our ministry would not be possible.

- \$2,726,152 raised from individual donors and estate/legacy gifts
- **This was the largest amount of funds raised in any 12-month period since America was founded in 1909!**
- 295 gifts of \$1,000 or more totalling \$2,118,222 in dollars raised
- The average gift size was \$301
  - 8,462 gifts received under \$300 totalling \$456,269 (every gift counts!)
- 9,055 total gifts
- 4,027 total donors
- 1,581 first-time donors
- Gifts received from donors who reside in all 50 states and from over 23 countries
- \$200,059 raised on **America's** Anniversary Giving Day
  - 1,055 donors from 48 states and 22 different countries
  - Gifts received from over 450 new donors
- \$62,252 raised on Giving Tuesday
  - 667 donors from 45 states and 13 different countries
  - Partnered with the Mikono Refugee Craft Shop in Nairobi, Kenya—a ministry of the Jesuit Refugee Service

If the last two years have taught us at **America** anything, one thing is certain. The course of events in modern life is ever-changing, and America Media is committed to accompanying our audience, sometimes challenging them to think differently.

It is for you, our readers, listeners, viewers and donors, that we work each day. We hope you continue to be members of our community. Please tell your friends about America Media and invite them to join us. Above all, thank you for reading, writing, watching and listening with us.

# America

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