Spirituality
News

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The most senior Franciscan priest in Germany, Fr. Cornelius Bohl, has called for reforms in the Catholic Church.

"I can well imagine and would be in favor of opening the priesthood to women in the future," Bohl, the provincial minister of the German province of the Order of Friars Minor, told the online edition of the Fuldaer Zeitung newspaper.

Bohl, 59, said that although he did not think "that this will happen that soon," further thought had to be given to it. "Women need to be more present and involved on an equal footing," he said. There were female members of the Franciscan order who worked together with the Franciscan friars in many places, he said.

On the future of religious orders in Germany, Bohl said: "We are living in an era in which monasteries are dying." Almost all religious orders were affected. The Franciscans currently have 28 sites in Germany. "In the long run, there will perhaps be 10 houses left in Germany."

It is becoming increasingly difficult for young people to commit themselves permanently to a "life project" such as joining a religious order, said Bohl. "This is due to a changed social situation, but certainly also to the crises the church is experiencing today," Bohl said.

Franciscans have been in Germany for more than 800 years.

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