News



Candace Owens speaks with attendees at the 2021 Young Women's Leadership Summit hosted by Turning Point USA at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. (Wikimedia Commons/Gage Skidmore, CC-BY-SA 2.0 deed)

Nate Tinner-Williams

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The firebrand conservative commentator Candace Owens has announced her conversion to Catholicism, a long-expected move for the controversial 34-year-old Black ideologue.

She announced the news on social media Monday afternoon (April 22), describing it as a "decision to go home."

"There is of course so much more that went into this decision and that I plan to share in the future. But for now, praise be to God for His gentle, but relentless guiding of my heart toward Truth."

Tweet from NCR staff reporter Brian Fraga on April 23, noting that one day after announcing her Catholic conversion, conservative commentator Candace Owens is a listed speaker at an upcoming "Catholic Identity Conference" (Twitter/@BrianFragaNCR)

The change for Owens comes amid shifting sands in her professional life, including an acrimonious exit from The Daily Wire in March following statements she made and supported that were seen as antisemitic.

Owens has lately made a decided shift toward more open support of Christianity, taking "Christ is King" as a mantra in many of her frequent online postings — often in support of ideas and policies seen as Christian nationalist and anti-Jewish.

She began using the phrase online in November 2023, when she first came under fire from the well-known Jewish-American conservative and Daily Wire cofounder Ben Shapiro, who called Owens' support for antisemitic tropes and criticism of Israel’s alleged Gaza genocide "disgraceful."

Owens brushed off the criticism for months as she continued hosting "The Candace Owens Show," then one of the most popular podcasts in the country — extending a long run of success for the millennial contrarian, dating back to her 2016 criticism of female victims in the "Gamergate" harassment campaign.

Owens grew her platform as a rare Black conservative voice during the 2020 U.S. presidential election, in which she threw her support behind Donald Trump. In 2018, she cofounded BLEXIT, which advocates for Black Americans to leave the Democratic Party.

Long identified as a Reformed Evangelical Protestant, in recent years Owens began speaking more frequently about Catholicism, not least because of her convert husband, the British activist and former Parler CEO George Farmer, whom she married in 2019. Owens hosted a theological debate between Farmer and Fox News commentator Allie Beth Stuckey, an evangelical, on her podcast in May 2023, racking up more than a million views on the first part of the discussion alone.

In a rare interview this week, Farmer spoke to the Catholic Herald on his family dynamics and his own conversion, though conspicuously avoiding the topic of Owens' religion. He did, however, speak on their differing career focuses.

"We have different brands," he said. "She is very outward-facing, and pretty much everything she says becomes a news story, whereas I am exclusively interested in faith."

At the time of the Farmer-Stuckey debate, Owens revealed that she regularly attended Mass with Farmer and their children but was not yet decided on making a denominational change. By March of this year, however, in response to a social media post asking if she is Catholic, she responded, "Almost there. ✝"

Tweet from Become A Saint (Twitter/@BeSaintly)

Some interpreted Owens' response as an indication that she would be received into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil, but there was no announcement forthcoming from the Nashville-based pundit.

In her social media announcement post this week, she is seen with the Oratorian priest Julian Large and a large vigil candle in her husband’s native London at the Brompton Oratory, a Latin Mass community established by St. John Henry Newman in 1849.

Reactions to Owens' conversion have varied, ranging from elation among conservative Catholics to reticence among those critical of her often far-right views.

Several Black Catholics took to social media to express their thoughts.

"Perhaps someone can send her a welcome package of post-Vatican II official Church statements about anti-semitism, and USCCB letters on immigrants to introduce her to her new faith?" wrote Jalane Schmidt, a scholar of religion at the University of Virginia.

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"Former sex workers that became Christian have publicly repented for their past ways. I expect folks to reject & repent publicly of their previous overtly racist statements & actions when they join the Church," added Gloria Purvis, who did not name Owens in her post. Purvis is a former EWTN Radio host who has made waves in recent years for her advocacy against racism.

"They have done too much harm to the human family."

Christopher Smith, a convert like Purvis and a Jesuit regent in Baltimore, took a decidedly moderate stance on Owens' new religious move.

"What wonderful news. I have never cared for your views, but, I am so so happy that you are a part of the Church," he wrote. "Our faith is the only view that truly matters."