

'America' apologizes for omission in Francis interview

Dennis Coday | Sep. 25, 2013

In [its historic 12,000-word interview](#) [1] with Pope Francis released last week, *America* magazine "inadvertently" omitted a sentence from the pope's comments about the role of women in the church, the magazine's editor-in-chief said.

When Jesuit Fr. Antonio Spadaro asked Francis, "What should be the role of women in the church?", Francis replied, "It is necessary to broaden the opportunities for a stronger presence of women in the church." This sentence was left out of the English translation of the interview *America* published. The sentence appears in the original Italian article and in the French, German and Spanish translations.

The missing sentence was discovered by *NCR* columnist Phyllis Zagano, an expert on deacons and women's issues in the church. Zagano writes about the omission in her column, "[What the pope really said](#) [2]," published Wednesday on NCRonline.org.

In a statement sent to *NCR* on Tuesday, *America* Editor-in-Chief Jesuit Fr. Matt Malone said, "Due to production error, one sentence in *America's* interview with Pope Francis was inadvertently deleted. ... *America* apologizes for this error, which was entirely inadvertent."

"The text will be corrected immediately in our online version of the article and a correction will be printed in the next issue of *America*," Malone told *NCR*.

Zagano wrote in her column that she believes the omission is a serious error that affected how people reading the interview in English understood what Francis said.

Francis was reacting to a question from Spadaro about church leaders who have told women, "There is no space for you in the church," Zagano told *NCR* in an interview Wednesday.

"Francis has turned that expression -- 'no space for you' -- around. He is saying, There is space for you here, pull up a chair," Zagano said.

"What is lost is the magnanimity of Francis welcoming women to positions of responsibility in our church," Zagano said.

Zagano found that a sentence from Spadaro's questioning was also absent from the English translation but is in the other language versions. The *America* version has Spadaro saying:

And what about the role of women in the church? The pope has made reference to this issue on several occasions. He took up the matter during the return trip from Rio de Janeiro, claiming that the church still lacks a profound theology of women. I ask: "What should be the role of women in the church? How do we make their role more visible today?"

Following is the sentence in Italian that other language versions of the interview includes in Spadaro's

questioning, after "several occasions" and before the reference to the Rio trip:

In una intervista aveva affermato che la presenza femminile nella Chiesa non è emersa più di tanto, perché la tentazione del maschilismo non ha lasciato spazio per rendere visibile il ruolo che spetta alle donne nella comunità.

NCR translated this passage as:

In an interview he [Pope Francis] had affirmed that the feminine presence in the church has not fully emerged, because the temptation of machismo has not left space to make visible the role women are entitled to within the community.

Malone told *NCR* space restrictions forced the magazine to trim some of Spadaro's questions.

Zagano said looking at these two sentences from a purely production standpoint, "I can see how you might feel like you were editing out a redundancy, but in fact, they have edited out something that was really important."

These sentences are also omitted in the English version of the pope's interview that appears in [Thinking Faith](#) [3], the online journal of British Jesuits.

The full text of the *America's* response follows:

Due to production error, one sentence in America's interview with Pope Francis was inadvertently deleted. On page 28 of the issue of September 30, 2013, Fr. Antonio Spadaro asks the pope: "What should be the role of women in the church? How do we make their role more visible today?" He answers: 'I am wary of a solution that can be reduced to a kind of?'" The sentence that was inadvertently deleted is a part of the pope's response. The full text should read: "'He answers: 'It is necessary to broaden the opportunities for a stronger presence of women in the church. I am wary of a solution that can be reduced to a kind of?'. America apologizes for this error, which was entirely inadvertent. We thank The National Catholic Reporter for bringing this matter to our attention. The text will be corrected immediately in our online version of the article and a correction will be printed in the next issue of America.

Fr. Matt Malone, S.J.

Editor in Chief

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