Twitter Thread by ■sor juana inés on eagles wings■■



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@notreallyachola

good morning. i have something I'd like to talk about. a short thread. (1/)

as a freshman in college, i had a job in ministry, working with both my peers and adults. that year there was an aspirant for the order working with us. he was very kind, outgoing and funny. we became friends, and started to hang out. (2/)

by "hanging out" I mean we'd walk around campus together, late at night, alone. I was a pretty sheltered kid, born of a stoic German movement, so though this seemed weird, I thought that maybe this was just how they did things here, a notion no one disabused me of. (3/)

except for one of my dear friends, who told me that this was NOT normal, not how our brothers acted, and i should stay away from him. But she was only a couple years older than me - and surely if he was acting oddly, an adult would step in? But none ever did. (4/)

In the meantime he got into a relationship with a female employee and left the order. All fine, all good. We passed a peaceful couple of years.
And then he came back. And they were set to let him take his vows. And that female employee was acting awfully strange. (5/)

And that lady and I ended up talking, and it turns out I had been lucky, because horrible things had happened to her that aren't mine to tell. And she begged me to go and report his impropriety, because he was painting her as a harlot, and the order wouldn't listen to her. (7/)

And so I did. I went to the director of the community and told him everything. And I will never forget how he looked at me and said "I'm sorry, but he had no vows yet. And anything he did in aspirancy doesn't count." (8/)

How can what he did in formation not count, I thought?? How does that make any sense?? But I had promised her I would try, and so begged a well-connected friend to get me a meeting with the provincial. (9/)

I met the provincial under a huge tree in our courtyard. As soon as I said the man's name, something slid shut in his eyes, and he said the same line his brother had years before. Before vows. Didn't count. It is an internal matter, he said, studiously not meeting my eyes. (10/)

In desperation I mentioned that I wasn't the only woman there had been issues with, surely he knew that, and anger crossed his face faster than he could hide it. Handled, he told me. An internal matter. Handled. Thank you for your concern. I assure you it is misplaced. (11/)

They whisked him out of our town after that year, to the next state of formation. He took his vows the year I graduated. There were rumors, whispers of issues, some oddly timed incidents, nothing concrete, of course. They moved him to a coveted post halfway across the world.(12/)

In graduate school I got the news that he'd left the order from the same friend that warned me, the only one that had. She thought I'd be happy, and maybe I should'be been, but I was thinking about all he managed to do under supervision, and what he might do now without it. (13/)

In that same year, a priest of my movement came to celebrate a Mass for us. How well you sing, how joyful you are, he told me. How lucky, he told my mother, how lucky you are to have each other! And it was true, we're all each other has, and how good of him to notice■ (14/)

And then one day, scrolling aimlessly, I saw his mugshot on Reddit.
He had abused a woman who lay helpless during Anointing of the Sick, tried to feel her up during the Sacrament.
The article dated the incident as shortly before the Mass he had said for us. (15/)

My mother wept, ugly tears I hadn't seen her weep since her parents died. I didn't. I couldn't. I sat there, and I held her, and I wondered how much of our lives were a lie. (16/)

Later that week I was staying with my Sisters, washing dishes in scalding water, and casually floated the question:
so,,,where did he go? What will happen to him, what'll be done?
Sr H looked at me. "I don't know," she said, extremely quietly. "They didn't tell us anything."(16/)

Today the report breaks. I know people have Thoughts about it. I don't have any. I don't have any suggestions, or condemnations, or ideas for moving forward. I doubt I would be listened to even if I did. (17/)

So i can't tell you any of that. I can only tell you of my small little life, and the lives of people I love, and the mess that men like this leave in their wake. (18/)

Based on our history, they won't see justice this side of heaven. And it's exhausting, and annoying, but it's all that i have - to believe that they will in the end.
Thanks for reading. (end)