

## **ORDER OF CREATION/ORDER OF REDEMPTION**

*The Ordination of Women in the Orthodox Church*

by

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### **PREFATORY REMARKS**

An idea growing in popularity among some Orthodox is the admission of women to the sacerdotal priesthood. The source for this idea is not the Scriptures, the Fathers, the Councils of the Church, but comes to us from the world, specifically the feminist movement. At one level, they view the ordination of women as something owed the female gender, a sign of the Church's repentance, so to speak, making up for the centuries of female stereotyping and powerlessness, that is to say, denying her the right to creatively express her ingenuity, exercise her freedom and exhibit her dedication.

Not incognizant of the objections in holy Tradition to the ordination of women to the presbytery (and consecration to the episcopacy), the strategy of its advocates is to declare this innovation an "open question." It is, however, not a subject to be debated, if only because feminists have no Orthodox criterion by which to make their case. The theological facts need only to be reviewed to make the point. We turn in a moment for an understanding of those facts to the only authorities (criteria) available to us — the Scriptures, the Fathers and the Canons. They have defined the place of women in the Church from the beginning.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Female aspirations to the priesthood are not something new. It has antecedents that reach through the Middle Ages to the time of the Apostles. On this matter, St Paul opposed the Gnostics. Early heretics, such as the Montanists and Priscillianists, had "ordained" priestesses. But women in the priestly office were naturally part of their religion. In the Orthodox Church, however, women had no access to the priesthood, and all her members were aware that their absence was natural and necessary to her life. The priesthood was understood to be a call from God, not the result of "cultural structures" or "political ideology" which unfairly favored men. Likewise, "the subordination of women" (which does *not* constitute inferiority) to the male was believed to be intrinsic to "the order of creation" and "the order of redemption" or "salvation."

With this doctrine we might expect that the history of women in the so-called "undivided Church" has been a showcase of contentment. It has not. There are instances of Christian women who, indifferent to the theological and canonical restrictions, invaded the sanctuary. In his letter to St Cyprian of Carthage, St Firmilian of Caesarea (d. 268) mentioned a woman who presumed to consecrate the elements and perform the Eucharist with no regard to the norms of the Church (Ep. Cyp. LXXV, 10 NPNF).<sup>\*</sup> In 494 Pope Gelasius declared, "We have noted with vexation, contempt of divine truths has reached such a level that even women, it is reported, serve at the holy altars. Everything that is entrusted exclusively to men, is performed by the sex that has no right to do so" (Ep. IX, 26 PL 59 55). Two centuries later, the Saxon King, Louis the Pious (778-840), complained that "in some provinces, contrary to divine law and canonical prescription, women are entering the sanctuary. They handle sacred vessels without fear, passing out

clerical vestments to the priests, and even distributing the Body and Blood of the Lord (and other indecent things) to the people... It is astonishing that this practice, forbidden by the Christian religion, should have crept in anywhere ...undoubtedly through the negligence of some bishop” (Mansi [vol. XVII], 565).

Generally, history displays no social movements in which women demanded the responsibilities that God has placed on the shoulders of men. Admission of women to the priesthood has never been a problem in the Orthodox Church; it has never been a “real cause,” as Fr Alexander Schmemmann once observed. In part, I suppose, because women were never without their own ministries, for example, the *presbytides* or “elderly women” (Laodicea, Can. 11) who, like the deaconesses that later replaced them, served the needs of their gender. They were usually widows, who interceded with the priest and bishop on behalf of women, helped in their baptism, prayed with them, nursed the sick and dealt with women’s personal problems. They performed no priestly functions.

The deaconess was counted with the lower orders, the sub-deacon, anagnost, psalter, sexton, and doorkeepers. Unfortunately, in the sixth century, the Emperor Justinian uncanonically made 40 deaconesses part of the 425 “clergy” that served Hagia Sophia. They entered the sanctuary and, other than preaching or communing the people, performed the duties of a deacon, according to the “Rite of the Byzantine Deaconess.” This episode was an aberration in the life of the Church, rewarded finally by the virtual banishment of this woman’s ministry. This order enjoys a certain revival today.

Unsatisfied with these results, contemporary Orthodox feminists have scrutinized every aspect of holy Tradition to find historical support for their “cause”; and not without first “changing the rules of the game.” Influenced by Western secular thought, they presume to offer a new understanding of the Church’s Tradition and, necessarily, her Scriptures. The very concept of Tradition (including the Fathers), they insist, must be reexamined to determine “what Tradition is and what it is not. Obedience to Tradition must not be seen as a kind of dead fundamentalism. It does not mean that nothing can ever be done for the first time. Holy Tradition, rightly understood, is dynamic, not static and inert.”<sup>1</sup> In just these few words, the entire legacy of the Orthodox Faith is thrown into doubt.

The issue is further exacerbated by the contemporary religious — that is to say, ecumenical — climate. With special regard to the Scriptures, the Coptic feminist, Marie Assad, insists that the Scriptures especially must be read “in the context of the present, always conscious of the difference between the cultural and historical setting of the past and present. Women in particular have an active role to play in re-reading Scripture according to our new awareness of ourselves and our role in society.”<sup>2</sup> Nothing is unexpected in her remarks, but we have a right to ask whether the fellowship of the Orthodox with non-Chalcedonian or Oriental Orthodox (or any other religious denomination) is part of this new “cultural and historical setting”? Is the “open question” further complicated by this fellowship? If we accept Ms Assad’s credentials, then, the call for the admission of women to the priesthood demands not only authentication but the expansion of Tradition: to include norms and values which have never been part of “the Eastern Orthodox” Faith.

But, then, we may wonder that since all “Christian feminists” have the same objectives, if not the same agenda, what matter the religious diversity? We have something here greater than confessional affiliation. In that case, there is a tacit

admission that their “cause” is not rooted in the Orthodox Tradition. Then we recognize it for what it is: not a compelling religious theme, but an invasion of the secularism into the Church. Then, too, we understand that their rummaging through “Tradition” for support of that “cause” is a search for confirmation not truth.

In that case, I have a few more questions: are Orthodox feminists willing to submit their complaints to the same analysis to which, in these last few decades, they have subjected the historical practices of their Church? Might they not discover another brand of stereotyping and discrimination? Do they have any suspicion that their opinions are destined to revision, if not obsolescence; and, ironically, by the same forces of history that they imagine have now disenfranchised the traditional ways of the Church? In truth, they have lost sight of the Christian imperative that the Holy Spirit preserves and protects the teachings of the Church. Their duty, as her sons and daughters, is to humbly accept, defend and assimilate the Faith. Are they genuinely fearful of transgressing “*the ancient landmarks which the fathers have erected*” (Prov. 23:28 LXX). If not, there is no reason to be Orthodox

At present, I am not inclined to believe that the Orthodox partisans of women in the priesthood view their “bold initiative” as subversive. Yet, Elizabeth Behr-Sigel (“the grandmother of Western Orthodoxy”), Kyriaki Kridoyanes Fitzgerald, Nonna Vera Harrison, Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Leonine B. Liveris, Eva Catafygiotou-Topping, etc., presume to bring a “new perspective” to the revealed truth. For that purpose, they have erected literary vehicles, such as the feminist-ecumenist journals, Massachusetts’s own *St Nina Quarterly* and Australia’s *Mary/Martha* to verbalize that “perspective.” They are encouraged by the support of the Constantinople and Antiochian Patriarchs who have arranged conferences — with no little help from the WCC — by means of which the proponents of woman’s ordination are given the opportunity to publicly ventilate their ruminations.

Contrary to the thinking of these “Westernizers”,<sup>3</sup> the place of women in the Church, as I said before, was permanently settled by the Apostles and, therefore, cannot be altered. It is a station for women with an uninterrupted Judeo-Christian practice of six millennia. We cannot but grieve the attitude of feminists, such as L.B. Liveris, who, because she conceives the “mistreatment” of women as “androcentric prejudices,” urges Orthodox women “to break the silence imposed on them not by the genuine tradition of the Church, but by social custom and convention.”<sup>4</sup> Hers is a proud and futile protestation.

Let us be clear on this matter: the Church has never *denied* women admission to the priesthood, because the “gift” was never offered them by God. The female gender has never been *deprived* of the office, because she was never eligible for it. The “equality” of the sexes (in the modern sense) was never been part of the Church’s thinking about the priesthood. As C. S. Lewis said, “I do not remember the text in Scripture, nor the Fathers...which asserts it.”<sup>5</sup> To be sure, men and women share the “image of God” and, therefore, have a common humanity; but “the primacy of honor” belongs to the male both in the “order of creation” and the “order of redemption.” The “order of redemption” is typified in the covenant between Yahweh and old Israel, and realized in the union of Christ and the Church. His death on the Cross is the sacrificial love of the Redeemer for His Bride, the ultimate male sacrifice for His Beloved Wife. The Eucharist is their wedding banquet.<sup>6</sup>

## A NEW QUESTION?

There are many factors that explain the development and promotion of the debate concerning women in the priesthood. There has been no more effective instrument in the furtherance of it than the World Council of Churches (WCC). Its guidelines on “the question of women” were composed at the Amsterdam Assembly of 1948. Its first pronouncement on the subject was not as innocuous as it seemed — “The Church consists of both men and women, and both have the same degree of personal worth, even if this fact is often disregarded in practice.”<sup>7</sup> The reference of the Assembly to “the personal worth of women” signifies much more “Personal worth,” like “equality,” are code words for the elimination of all male privileges and patriarchy or, what is the same thing, the eradication of Biblical anthropology; and, therefore, the complete transformation of Christianity, as it has hitherto been known.

Two bodies within the WCC most interested in the women’s ordination are the Commission of Faith and Order and (as it is presently called) The Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women in Church, Family and Society.” The latter was especially active in the pursuit of this woman’s cause. In response to the Uppsala Assembly (1968), the Department convoked several meetings to discuss the question of women in the priesthood. In 1974, a conference was held in Berlin that undertook to study “Sexism in the 70s.” Emphasis was placed on changing “masculine structures” in society. “Sexism” was defined as “any kind of subordination or devaluation of a person or group solely on the basis of sex.” Any form of social precedence for males — abusive or not — connected with the subordination of women was described by many of the conferees as “heresy,” even something “demonic”<sup>8</sup>

In 1976, the WCC also sponsored the first international conference of Orthodox women, at the Agapia Monastery (near Bucharest, Rumania). Curiously no women were invited to the Anglican –Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission held in Athens, July of 1978. The ordination of women was firmly rejected at both meetings. The Anglican bishop had proposed that both Anglican and Orthodox women should be invited, but the late Greek Orthodox, Archbishop Athenagoras (Kokkinakis) of Great Britain and Thayteira overruled him. With a sharp rebuke, he also rejected any notion of female priests, saying that it is “a contemporary fashion, which overthrows the evangelic order and the experience of the Church.”<sup>9</sup>

During the Rhodes Consultation (1988) the question of women’s ordination was finally debated. Generally, for Orthodox theologians with a Western background, it was a crucial problem. They had serious reservations about overturning a two thousand-year tradition. Rhodes concluded that “the consciousness of the Church from the very beginning excluded women from participation in the special priesthood [as opposed to “the priesthood of believers”], on the basis of the example of the Lord and the Apostles, Tradition and practice, in the light of the Paul’s teaching concerning the relationship between men and women in the new reality in Christ.”<sup>10</sup> Of course, not everyone agreed with this conclusion by reason of the modern conception of male-female equality, and on the basis of what so many have called “the silence of tradition” on this question.

Under the auspices of the WCC, other meetings were held in Crete (1990), Damascus (1996), Istanbul (1997), all treating the subject of woman’s place in the Church. Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch addressed the meeting, asserting that

“Christianity is an Eastern reality” which includes “our non-Chalcedonian Orthodox sister churches.” In his remarks to the Istanbul assembly, Patriarch Bartholomew emphasized that “women are able and should be invited to offer guidance to the Church on issues that specifically concern them.”<sup>11</sup> No doubt the women in attendance were pleased with the attitude of the Patriarch, but they were aware that neither he nor the vast majority of Orthodox leaders had yet begun to formulate the issue. They were not given hope that “one day soon” Orthodox women would be wearing the *philoneon*.

In American Orthodoxy, there is also division over the idea of ordaining women to the priesthood. There is no better illustration of this than Women and the Priesthood, edited by the retired Dean of St Vladimir’s Russian Orthodox Seminary, Fr Thomas Hopko, first printed in 1983 and updated in 1999. In the chapter “The Debate Continues — 1998,” Fr Thomas says that the advocates of woman’s ordination claim to “defend their views as the result of their studies of the Church fathers.”<sup>12</sup> He disputes them, but seems unaware that the Fathers to which they referred are the Cappadocians who are “the true founders of the doctrine of humankind in Orthodox theology.” Along with St Maximus the Confessor, they ostensibly teach there is an “ontological unity of mankind beyond the distinction between men and women, according to the order of creation.”<sup>31</sup>

Straining to find an anthropology in the history of the Church to accommodate their feminist ideology, Orthodox egalitarians have in fact set the Fathers against Tradition with a new doctrine of man. In part, they hoped to counter “the iconic argument” for the exclusively male priesthood. They reasoned that gender is irrelevant to the office of priest. Men and women share the same nature, a common humanity, that is, both are the “icons” (Grk.) or “images” (Lat.) of God. But the “image of God” in the individual is not the same “image” or “icon” of Christ related to the occupant of the priesthood. For one thing, the “image of God” to which Moses refers in Genesis is phrase used metaphorically to describe “that side of our nature that consists of mind and free will,” as St John of Damascus said (De Fid. Orth. II, 12 PG 94 920B). The Fathers tell us that the priest is the “image” of the theandric Christ.

I do not know to what depth Orthodox feminists have carried their analysis of Christian anthropology. I am certain that they object to the notion of “the subordination of women” to men (a major patristic theme) as the equivalent of “the inferiority of women.” Yet, my reading of their literature has not convinced me that they have treated the facts of this “question” objectively, that is, according to Scriptural and patristic intention. Indeed, some Orthodox have resorted to the radical ideology of the “gender feminists.” They seem willing to turn the Christ-Prototype into something mythical; hence, to consider Jesus as both male and female, that is, as *androgynous*, the Romantic “Primal Man” or, what the Jewish Kabbalah calls, *Adam Kadmon* —part male and part female. But this has no place in the Christian Tradition. That the Word was incarnate as a male (*theandros*), and not as a woman is sufficient proof of “whose hands and tongue” He intended to offer “the sacrifice of praise” to God at the altar. To be precise, it is the bishop who is “the living icon of Christ” (St Ignatius of Antioch). He is male as the Incarnate Lord was male. This is the *mysterion*.

## HOLY TRADITION

St Paul commands “*in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*” that the Faithful of Thessalonica separate themselves from brethren who do not follow the “tradition” which

he, the Apostle, delivered to them. They are to “withdraw themselves” from any “brother” who “walks disorderly” and not after the “tradition” he has transmitted to them. Paul is not the source of the “tradition” (*traditio, paradosis*). The instructions which he “handed over” to the churches was nothing more than the “teachings” which Christ gave to the Apostles, “*Go, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age. Amen*” (Matt. 28:19-20). In a word, the holy Tradition possessed by the Orthodox Church at this hour originated with the Savior Himself. .

Tradition is “handing over” or “delivering” the revealed Truth to the Church through the Apostles, those men whom He empowered to teach His theological and ethical doctrine. Tradition contains everything necessary for salvation — about the Trinity (theology), the Creation (cosmology), man and the Fall (anthropology), Old Israel, the Incarnation, the Church and her Mysteries (ecclesiology), the Theotokos (mariology), the Last Things (eschatology), etc. Tradition is not only what is “delivered” but also the means or method by which what the Church transfers Her Faith from one generation to the next. The means of delivery are: the Scriptures, the writings of the Fathers, the rites of the Church, the canonical and doctrinal decisions of the ecumenical Councils, the liturgies, the icons, music, sacred customs, even the lives of the Saints.

May holy Tradition be altered? May we add to or subtract from it? Is it open to diverse interpretation according to time and circumstance? If we mean by “change” or “alteration” believing now what was not believed before, and from the beginning, we answer in the negative. The teachings of the Orthodox Church are divine, therefore, infallible and immutable. They were “*once delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3), and will remain the same until the “*end of the age*” by the Will of the Holy Spirit.

Since Tradition is unchanging, we must expect conflict with the ever-changing non-Orthodox societies to which the Church ought to be the leaven. Her children must expect opposition. The Church must not conform to contemporary society, but that society to the Church. She will always be a “*scandal to the Jews and folly to the Greeks*” (1 Cor. 1:23). God acts through the Church to recover the world stolen from Him by the devil. Tradition is her mind, her memory, the power by which she meets every “challenge and crisis.”

Ms N. V. Harrison holds that any description of the Tradition as unchangeable, kills all hope of “creative development” and reduces Tradition to “the argument from authority,” which reflects negatively on the moral character of God.<sup>15</sup> Her discontent is clearly a product of her dreams. She is right, however, that there is necessary relation between Tradition and our understanding of God. If we believe that He expects correction of His revelation by our generation, He has left us a message to that effect or we have received a new revelation. Neither has been given. It is sure, however that if we regulate the Orthodox Tradition to accommodate present social trends, future generations may be led by force of circumstances, to more adjustments, with the result that our understanding of revelation must be modified..

Without an fixed and inerrant Tradition, the Church is defenseless before a world in which believers are “*children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive*” (Eph. 4:14). If we may add or subtract from it, then, there will be no spiritual

and doctrinal continuity between one generation of the Church and the next. If the fullness of doctrinal truth is necessary for salvation, then, with the constant realignment of the Faith, there will come a time when none can be saved. By what means shall we identify the teachings the Lord commands us to observe? How shall we speak of “the Apostolic Tradition,” having lost touch with the Apostles by virtue of the incessant innovating. The spirit and doctrines of the Fathers will become anachronistic, while the Bible becomes a closed book for the number of clashing interpretations. Soon we will not know what to believe; if it will make any difference.

I weary of this modern tinkering with Tradition, and all for the sake of new trends and theories, as if new times demand new truths. Some modern Orthodox “theologians” seek, in the face of great challenge to the traditional Faith, to find solutions that satisfy both the so-called “traditionalists” and the “progressives.” Thus, Bishop Kallistos (Ware) characterizes holy Tradition as “the critical spirit of the Church.” Apparently, secular society ignites the process of rethinking old ways in terms of new relevancies, leading to the abrogation of patriarchal prejudices, practices and canons of the Church, which, at this present moment, have deprived women of their full membership in the Christian community. Current exigencies demand that they should have “roles as teachers in the pastoral ministry of the Church,” he remarks in his 1997 interview with Teva Regule of the Mary/Martha periodical. He is not alone in speaking of “creative fidelity” to Tradition, in order to resolve problems the Orthodox Church has never met before. He sees in this attitude no effect on the internal and essential teachings of the Christian Faith.

His Grace is not alone in thinking that unless such changes are made in Tradition, the Church loses her pertinence; but, also, she ceases to be a living thing. For this reason, we must ask questions about “slavish adherence to the past.”? Yet, there is an implicit denial of the Orthodox heritage as complete and faultless. A “traditionalist,” however, greets Tradition with humility. He is grateful to previous generations that have suffered for what was given to them. An unsullied Faith has been passed to us, and it is for us to pass the Faith to the next generation in the same condition as we received it.

These teachings have been “delivered” to us by means of the divine Liturgy and the Church’s other Mysteries — which stand at the center of her beliefs and worship — *lex credendi et lex orandi*. The Liturgy is the repository of the elements that compose the Tradition, none more essential than the priesthood. The congregation prays according to the canons of the Church, e.g., a priest canonically ordained, men and women in their places (*tagmata*), prayers offered standing on Sunday, etc. We do not alter them lest we alter the truths they symbolize.

Are we to believe that everywhere and always the Church has demanded uniformity? Externally, of course not. If, then, new symbols may be added from time to time and place to place, why cannot appropriate symbols be devised that allow women access to the priesthood? In part, because admission to the priesthood is not, in the first place, a legal or consuetudinal question. We are not free with every new cultural trend to invent new symbols and customs and rites to accommodate it, especially when it contradicts holy Tradition. Such priestly symbols would express something new about Christ Who is the Priest of the Eucharist. If they are feminine symbols, they would suggest that Christ is both male and female, something never taught in the Orthodox Church.

## THE CANONS

In the introduction to the Rudder, Sts Agapius and Nicodemus declare, “Thou must keep them safe and above every calumny of caviling critics, and render them trustworthy and indisputable, to be received by all Christian peoples with the authority of Councilor and Apostolic decision.” In a word, the Canons are an integral component of holy Tradition. None may tamper with their prescriptions nor ignore their purpose. They are the culture within which the “new man” is formed.

The proponents of women’s ordination argue that some of the Canons are demeaning to women. They are forbidden to enter the Sanctuary (Canon 44 of Laodicea). They are denied Holy Communion during menstruation (Canon 2 of St Dionysius of Alexandria). They are commanded to remain silent during the Liturgy (Canon 70 of Quinisext).<sup>16</sup> The Canons are plainly barriers to feminist ambitions.

Those who favor the admission of women to the Orthodox priesthood hold that the existing Canons should be supplanted or economized, which suggests that they view the Sacrament or Mystery of Ordination as a legal convention. They want Canons to be added that institutes a women “right” to the sacerdotal priesthood. New Canons, indeed, may be added to the extant body of ecclesiastical legislation, but they may not replace or supercede the old. They may not contradict what already exists. In addition, to apply the principle of leniency (*economia*) does not imply that legitimate ends of any Canon may be contravened. Neither is “economy” a surrender to circumstance as the Latin legal aphorism states — “Necessity creates what is not permitted by law” (*quod non est licitum lege necessitas facit licitum*). This principle can, as I believe it eventually shall, provide a basis for the admission of women to the Roman Catholic priesthood. In the case of the Orthodox Church, however, there has never been, nor can there be, a revision of existing Canons. She does not understand her Canons as “laws,” so much as moral and spiritual imperatives.

Finally, the Canons recognized by the Church as universal and admitted by her as the work of the Holy Spirit. Listen to the first Canon of the 7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council:

*“...We welcome and embrace the divine Canons, and we corroborate with rigid fiat the entire body of them that have been set forth by the renowned Apostles, who were and are trumpets of the Spirit, and of the six holy Ecumenical Councils and those composed by the regional synods for the purpose of setting forth such edicts, and the of our holy Fathers. For all those men, having been guided by light dawning from the same Spirit, prescribed rules that are to our interest. According, we too anathematize whomsoever they consign anathema; and we too depose whomsoever they consign to deposition; and we too excommunicate whomsoever they consign to; and we likewise subject to a penance anyone they liable to penance...”*

There is no remedy for the advocates of the female priesthood in the Canons. As they are, the Canons cancel egalitarian demands. Orthodox “progressives,” if they do not ignore the Canons altogether, simply “economize” them into irrelevance, a practice that encourages feminists to believe that in the future, there may be a canonical solution to their frustration. One must fear the consequence of canonical abuse.

## THE HOLY FATHERS

*"Following the holy Fathers..."* is a pledge the Orthodox Church has never failed to keep. She has never failed, whether by treatise or encyclical or Canon, in theology or spirituality, to proclaim her allegiance to them. They are an authority, not a resource. She accepts them as "new prophets," not as philosophers. Their writings and sermons, art and music, canons and spirituality are not valued as personal speculations, but as inspired witness to the Faith inherited from the Apostles. The Church speaks of each generation of Fathers as having received their beliefs from their predecessors, and they back to the time when she received them from the Savior. The Fathers preserved and defended what the Christian heritage, testifying to the history of sacred teachings as revealed by God and passed to every generation of Orthodox under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

On this account, the Church believes them. We might otherwise love and admire the Fathers merely for their piety. And if they had left us their personal Scriptural interpretations to study, we might fairly insist that our own exegesis of the Old and New Testament was as good, even more so because we have scientific methods of inquiry not available to them. If our Biblical insights agreed with theirs, it would be a happy coincidence, and perhaps increase our confidence in them. Thankful as we might be to them, we might, nevertheless, follow our own light. Of course, we might concede that since they lived closer to the time of the Apostles, their opinions are owed a certain deference; but beyond that advantage, their theological achievements were really no better than our own.

But the Church does not characterize her veneration of the Fathers in this way. Their knowledge of the Faith comes from a higher Source than archeology, criticism and comparative literature. She does not think of them as speaking to one generation alone, but to all times, to all societies, to all men, until the Return of Christ. They did (do) not deliver relativised opinions to the nations, but what God has disclosed "*once and for all.*" Thus, what they taught and what they gave to the next generation of Orthodox is a reaffirmation of, not speculation concerning "*the Faith once delivered to the saints*" (Jude 3). If this were not the case, if what they taught did not originate with the Apostles, there would be no "faith of our fathers." In other words, their witness must have the same authority among twenty-first century Orthodox as it had in the beginning, and shall have to the end. If not, then, "patristics," although of historical interest, would place no obligation on us any more than it had on those who bequeathed to us; neither would we have the solemn duty to safeguard the gospel for our posterity, etc. In that case, Tradition would be a patchwork of doctrines mandatory upon no one. Then, the Councils, which endorsed their teachings, would be untrustworthy. Orthodox would have no assurance that what they believed was the saving Truth. We would have the Scriptures, of course, but its books would offer the same sort of exegetical dilemma for Orthodoxy as it always has for Protestantism from its inception. Indeed, there could be no "essential grounds" against the ordination of women to the Church's priesthood or episcopate.

There are several cautions in reading the Fathers. It is with deliberate purpose that the Church refers to "the Fathers" in the plural. They are a "cloud of witnesses" to the Apostolic Faith. The Orthodox Church does not allow one or two Fathers, whatever their eminence, to speak for her. Some might like it otherwise.<sup>17</sup> Although we may acquiesce to the wisdom of them individually, the authority of the Fathers as infallible resides in the

unity of their witness; it sometimes called a “consensus.” Second, we must not consider all Christian writers of the past as her spokesmen or Fathers of the Church and therefore part of the patristic consensus. Clearly, if every writer is a “Father of the Church” — such as Origen and Clement of Alexandria — we cannot reasonably argue that a consensus existed at all. In any case, it is the Church that determines who speaks for her.<sup>18</sup> She honors her representatives with a feast, with a place on the ecclesiastical calendar, honors them with icons, both temples and persons named after them. Their spiritual feats are told and retold throughout the ages.

Finally, the Fathers do not contradict one another. In matters of doctrine and spirituality they teach the same, including the subject of women. Thus, not a single Father entertains the idea of women priests. They follow the teachings of the Apostles and the Lord Himself. The Apostles and their successors saw the absence of women from the priesthood as the Will of God, not societal discrimination nor male perfidy, nor “a fossilized traditionalism.” The holy Fathers have explained the attitude of the Church on this issue. They give us wisdom, not ideology. Their verdict is clear: *women may not be priests*.

“Never, anywhere, has any woman acted as priest for God, not even Eve,” wrote St Epiphanius of Salamis. “Even after her fall she was never so audacious as to lay her hand to an undertaking so impious as this; nor did any of her daughters.... Many men in the Old Testament offered sacrifices, but nowhere had a woman exercised the priesthood (*hierissas prosetaxe*).” There is nothing in the worship of Old Israel to permit it (Pan. LXXIX, 2 PG 42 741B). Also, in the New Testament Church, he continues, “no woman was ever permitted to canonically (*kanonikon*) perform liturgical acts.” “Never has a woman been appointed priests or bishops” (3, 744D). He describes priestesses as “a new myth” (4, 745B). To be sure, St Epiphanius and the some of the other Fathers and ecclesiastical writers did not always speak about women in flattering terms, but this practice was a pastoral stratagem of rhetorical exaggerations to teach women humility. Jews and pagans did the same. To my knowledge, our holy Mothers never raised the question of the female gender in the priesthood.

## **THE “MASCULINITY” OF GOD.**

According to Judge Robert Bork, radical feminism is the most destructive and fanatical movement to reach our century from the sixties. Promising to give women choices, it rather condemns any thought or behavior inconsistent with its agenda. It is totalitarian in spirit, deeply antagonistic to traditional culture, and proposes the complete transformation of religion, morality and society by a new understanding of human nature. Feminists are convinced that only new values and institutions will liberate women from the historic oppression of their sex that has denied them the free exercise of her talents and the realization of their most personal aspirations. The Port Huron Statement identifies woman’s oppressor as “patriarchy” (i.e., the male sex) or tyranny that has confined her to Children, Church and Kitchen —*Kinder, Kirche und Kuchen*— and *a fortiori* as sex object. Hence, their hatred for the institution of marriage and the family, and the support of them by the Christian religion. Radical feminists are certain that men and their patriarchal deity are behind it. “No God’, ‘no master,’ no ‘laws’ seems to be their motto.

“The exclamation ‘no God’ presumably refers to the feminist illusion that religion was intended by men to control women.”<sup>19</sup>

The religious aim of “radical feminists” is the feminization of God, and hence, the emasculation of the world’s male population. They are not egalitarians. As a part of their philosophy, many of them have adopted the Platonic myth about male-female creatures (androgyny). At present, the sexes are differentiated, but in the future the traits of one will be the traits of the other. “Androgynization” is the destiny of the human race. Many feminists, also, believe in the superiority of women; consequently, the future of humanity is female dominance (matriarchy).

Naturally, they reject anything that opposes their agenda, which involves, if not the abolition of Scriptures, a complete rewording of them, that is, the elimination of its so-called masculine gender bias. Also, the deity (“God/ess” as some address it) of radical feminism is not the God of the Prophets, the Apostles and the Fathers. “She” rejects what her daughters reject, approves what they approve. One would expect, too, that She abhors the traditional definitions of “masculinity” and “femininity” — the male as bold, resolute, authoritative; the female as “*the weaker vessel*” (I Pet. 3:7), gentle, nurturing, pacific, sympathetic, etc. Perhaps, there is some truth in the feminist prognostication, inasmuch as today we find men and women often sharing the same characteristics; hence, “the tender male” and “the strong female”; or, more accurately, the emasculated male and the virilized female. “Gender feminists” are doing their work well. “Nature” is being corrected by their “nurture.”

Most feminists calling themselves “Christian” are willing to combine elements of the biblical tradition with the anthropological aims of the radicals. They seem to have no aspirations too manhood, nor do they resent womanhood. One “Christian feminist” told me that she approves of strong men. Unlike the radicals, also, she did not abhor motherhood or “wifery,” and she loved children. Her only concern was “equality of rights and opportunity.” She did not crave the revision of the Nicene Creed to read, “*I believe in one Father/Mother*”; and the Lord’s Prayer as “*Our Father/Mother which art in the heavens*.” Neither did she demand “inclusive language” in the Bible (e.g., “human” for “man” or “Child of God” for “Son of God” or “Parent” for “Father”).

Most Orthodox feminists, although not in accord with the theology of the radicals or “gender feminists”, yet, to some degree, share with them a common understanding of church history. They explain the exclusion of women from the priesthood on the basis of “patriarchy” and man-centered (“androcentric”) values. They are also grateful to the feminist movement in general for “raising the consciousness” of society on woman’s issues. They see, also, women gradually achieving a new status in the Church (e.g., teaching in seminaries, serving on Church Board’s, etc.), an obvious impact of the feminist movement on the Church. The door to women in the priesthood is opening.

In addition, not a few feminists imagine that this new picture of women may in fact have been the primitive conception of the Christian women, somehow lost in the long trek of the Church towards 21st century enlightenment. The changes they want would surely begin with the worship of the Church, and the worship with her language and rubric; and that would be followed by a reexamination of the “masculine God.” Naturally, then, a justification of the changes would require a new study of the Scriptures with their masculine language and imagery.

Let us concede that holy Writ does indeed sometimes attribute feminine characteristics to God. Thus, “*the Rock that begot you...the God who gave you birth*” (Deut. 32:18); or, Yahweh says, “*I cry out as a woman in labor, gasping and panting*” (Isa. 42:14). Also, He exclaims, “*As a mother comforts her son, so will I comfort you*” (Isa. 66:12). Some feminists argue that such verses ought to initiate the beginning of the Christian “de-patriarchalization” of the Scriptures, which would profoundly influence our conception of God and how we should address Him/Her.

Although there are words and phrases that characterize His behavior as feminine, nowhere in the Old or New Testament is God conceived or addressed as feminine *per se*. Even when female images or similes are ascribed to His actions; it is still very much a “masculine” Divinity to whom they are applied. This is clear from the consistent use of the masculine pronoun “He” for God. Nowhere is He called “she” or “her,” even when feminine imagery is involved. The Bible never refers to Him as “Mother,” or some other female appellation. Nowhere in the Scriptures is God hailed as “Queen” or “Mistress,” “consort” or “matriarch.” On the contrary, although not a man and beyond gender, He is ordinarily compared to a masculine-father.<sup>20</sup> The inspired Biblical writers *never* think of God except in masculine terms.

In the Hebrew, the names of God, *Yahweh* and *Elohim*, are masculine. He is described as “*Father*” (Ex. 4:22; Deut. 32:6; Isa. 63:16; Mal. 2:10, etc.). Jesus prays, “*Our Father*” (Matt, 6:9). He is “father” in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Through baptism and the Spirit of adoption we are privileged to cry, “*Abba, Father*” (Rom. 8:15). God has the title of King (*ho basileus*) Who rules a Kingdom (*he basileia*). He is Lord, *ho kyrios*. He is also Judge, Master, Savior, and Ancient of Days. The Old Testament speaks of Him as “the God of Abraham,” not “the God of Sarah.” The fact that the man Adam was created before the woman Eve suggests that God, in His actions (i.e., the Uncreated Energies), is masculine rather than feminine.

One might pause to ask whether there is something in the divine Nature and Its relation to man which accounts for the use of masculine symbols? We may also ask whether we may alter or displace these symbols without violating the Scriptures? If the sacred books were “cleansed” of male bias, what would be our criterion? Secular egalitarianism? Must the Church accept the idea of “equality” as modern society defines it? Not even believers have been given that right. Surely, if such changes are made, either we deny that the Bible is revealed and infallible, or somehow we have received divine permission deprive it of “androcentric values.” I know of no one, not now nor in the past, with the holiness, the wisdom or the authority to revise the Scriptures.

To eliminate gender language altogether in theological discourse, as feminists demand, is post-Christian mischief with no justification in Orthodox Tradition. Rather than obedience to the word, there are some that would prefer to explain the Divine masculinity as “gender bias” as the writer’s cultural conditioning rather than divine inspiration. There is certain irony in this point of view, because it was the ancient pagans who had goddesses and priestesses — who in their function and status were not in the least inferior to male gods and priests. Some of the Fathers held that the idea of the pagan priestess is necessarily linked to the idea of female deity. The history of ancient religions would argue that this connection was not coincidental. I fear the modern revival of female deities among feminists (and witches) and their call for women to the priesthood

is more than accidental. I have a sense that the noise of some Orthodox women for admission to the priesthood may, in some instances, presupposes a feminized God.

Their logic seems to be that if God is not masculine, then, it is not important for Christ to be male, and, since the priest is the icon of Christ, a neutered Christ may act as Prototype for either male or female. Furthermore, if “masculinity” is emblematic of neither God nor Christ, the Church and society must dispense with their patriarchies. But Orthodox Church maintains that the history of the human race begins with Adam and Eve, and, as F. Crusermann says, Genesis 2 postulates “a clearly androcentric view of the world.”<sup>21</sup> The rest of the Bible confirms it.. The admission of women to the priesthood cannot occur until the Church renounces the theology and anthropology of Genesis as traditionally understood.

We have this wisdom from C.S. Lewis to add. “But Christians think that God Himself has taught us how to speak of Him. To say that it does not matter is to say that all the masculine imagery is not inspired, is merely human in origin; or else that although inspired, is merely arbitrary and unessential. And this is surely intolerable; or, if tolerable, it is an argument not in favor of Christian priestesses, but against Christianity.”<sup>22</sup>

## The Male Christ

Not only Orthodox feminists contend that the Fathers gave no special attention to Christ’s maleness. Much is made of the fact that the Nicean Creed announces that “He became man” or “human” (*anthropos*) — *enanthropesantos* — and not “male” (*aner*). In point of fact, the Greek word *anthropos* may be used for “human” or “male,” never for female. The Fathers also speak of Christ as “the God-male” (*theandros*), and precisely because the Word took the form of a male. St John of Damascus (*Barl. et. Iosaph.* VIII, 60-62; Woodward, trans.) refers to the Incarnation as “the theandric economy” (*tes theandrikes oikonomias*). Christ became both an individual male (*aner*) and humanity (*anthropos*), even as Adam, the type of Him Who was to come (Rom. 5:14).

Christ was not an androgynous being. Adam was male, as Eve was female. We may not jump to the conclusion (as some do) that because Eve emerged from him, He was *andro-gyne*, a being as much male as female — until God “liberated” his female side. To be sure, Eve was born of Adam’s side as he slept on the ground. She was the type of the Church (second Eve) that was born from Christ’s side as he slept on the Cross, St John Chrysostom observed (*Baptismal Instructions*. III, 17-18 ACW). Eve was “the mother of the living,” as the Church is the mother of the new living — “the Christian race,” as St Justin Martyr called it. The human race is the natural progeny of Adam and Eve. All who have been reborn through baptism form the new and spiritual humanity of Christ (male) and the Church (female). In other words, as the woman, Eve, was taken from the one man (Adam) for the reproduction of the human race, so the female Church was taken from the one Man (Christ), to reproduce “the many”, the new humanity. Baptism is her womb.

Orthodox Christology demands that the Savior is a male. He was the Son of the Virgin Mary. The Incarnation of the Word specified what modality of human He was — male. He was given a male name, Jesus (*Ieshua*). He was “churched” and circumcised as all Jewish males in antiquity. Jesus was always addressed as “he.” He was called Lord,

Master, Rabbi, Messiah, all male titles. He offered His male Blood on the Cross to His “masculine” Father — as the story of Abraham and Isaac typify (Gen. 22: 1-13).. He is the Bridegroom of the Church, her Head, as Adam was the head of Eve: “*for the man is the head of the woman*” (I Cor. 11:3). He is male as He sits in Glory at the Right Hand of the Father. It will be the male Christ that returns to judge the living and the dead. The saved shall enter the eternal Kingdom of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

According to St Gregory the Theologian (329-390), Christ was completely male. “He was a male because He offered Himself for Adam; or rather the Stronger of the strong when the first man had fallen under sin. There is in Him nothing feminine, nothing unmanly. He burst from the bonds of the Virgin Mother’s womb with much power, and a male was brought forth by the prophetess, as Isaiah declares “*the good tidings*” (Oration on Pascha, 13 PG 36 641A). Later, St Theodore the Studite (795-826) will say, “Maleness and femaleness are found only in the forms of bodies, since none of the difference which characterize the sexes can be recognized in bodiless beings. Therefore, if Christ were uncircumscribable, as they are, He would also be without sexuality. But He was born male, as Isaiah said (Ref. Iconom.III, 45 PG 99 409CD).

If, then, Christ is male, He is male not only because His Father is “masculine” but because He is the “second Adam.” Consequently, if He is the Priest of the Liturgy, His icon must be male. The human priest of the Eucharist is male. As Fr John Pacheco rightly puts it, “God chose the male sex to redeem the world, and so he chooses males to continue to do so in this the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.”<sup>23</sup> Fr Louis Bouyer is plainly astonished by those who fail to understand this simple fact. “It would have been monstrous if the Son of God have been a woman,” he writes, “and it would been a total contradiction to wish that He be represented among us by both men and women without distinction in His work of revealing the Father...”<sup>24</sup>

It is shortsighted of Ms N.V. Harrison that she refuses to accept the connection between gender and the priesthood; or, perhaps, she interprets any male privilege as a sign of female inferiority.<sup>25</sup> She cannot imagine the equality of the sexes without equal distribution of power. But this idea of “equality” is secular, if not socialist, and simply irrelevant to the christology of the priesthood. Men and women are equal by virtue of their spiritual nature and the image of God that is property of every human being. It is, therefore, an inane hyperbole for P.K. Jewett to declare that the “exclusion” of woman from the priesthood is no more than “the reluctance of males to include females in the human race.”<sup>26</sup>

### **The Male Priesthood**

Hopefully the reader is beginning to suspect that women are forbidden the priesthood for reasons other than those provided by its advocates. With regard to the place of women in the Church, the Orthodox Tradition does not need to justify itself, as Madam Behr-Sigel demands. The cry of “outmoded taboos,” “misogynic stereotypes,” “the stagnation of theological thought,” “discrimination” and “patriarchy”<sup>27</sup> is a form of tactical intimidation. If we may use some of it ourselves, the demand for the ordination of women is an act of *apostasy*, not “a creative development of the living tradition of the Church.”<sup>28</sup> The priesthood is male for the arguments already made, and others yet to be provided.

We need to recall that the Lord made no woman an Apostle.<sup>29</sup> To no woman did He say, “*He who hears me, hears you.*” To no woman did He promise to ratify in heaven what she had bound or loosed on earth. To no woman did He give the apostolic commission. No woman succeeded the Apostles as bishops of the Church. To no woman did He commend His flock He gave permission to no woman to baptize or to preside at the Eucharist. In fact, no woman was present at the Mystical Supper. Save for the Theotokos, there is no evidence of any woman present at Pentecost. Although women have always had many ministries in the Church, not for two thousand years has she included women in the priestly hierarchy.

Until just a few generations ago, it was universally assumed throughout the Orthodox world that the example of the Lord in choosing only men to be His Apostles, the emphatic language of St Paul in prohibiting women to preach or teach the Church, constituted overwhelming proof against their female ordination.<sup>30</sup> This practice is unequivocally affirmed in the writings of the holy Fathers. Sacred custom and canons reinforced the prohibition with collateral arguments. To repeat, women could not enter the sanctuary (Laodicea 11, 44). They could not speak in the Church (Quinisext, 70). St Dionysius of Alexandria (c. 247) declared that menstruous women must not receive holy Communion (Canon 2). St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain prohibits women from chanting whether in a female choir or with men. Women, he insisted, are to remain silent, that is, neither to teach, nor speak, nor to talk in the congregation.<sup>31</sup> Under these conditions alone, it would be impossible for women to be priests.

The same is true for the order of deaconess, which seems to have replaced the order of widows (*presbytides*) who did very much the same kind of ministry. If not virgins they were without spouse, at least 40 years old (Quinisext, canon 14). There is some dispute among Orthodox scholars whether they were “appointed” or “ordained.”<sup>32</sup> According to the Apostolic Constitutions (VIII, 17, 1125 NPNF) they were appointed. St Hippolytus of Rome says they were “appointed” not “ordained” because the Deaconess did not offer the oblation (*prospora*), nor celebrate the Liturgy (Ap. Trad., 11; Chadwick trans.). They were reckoned among chanters, readers and sub-deacons (Ap. Can., VIII, 28, 1128). Unlike St John Chrysostom who considered them “female deacons” (with duties peculiar to her ministry), while others held another view. In any case, the deaconess was not permitted to insinuate herself into sacerdotal functions, but simply to do those things pertaining to women

Let us be clear on this matter. If women have, on the basis of male manipulation of revelation, been kept from their rightful place in the leadership of the Church, then, the Scriptures, the Fathers, canons and customs must be overhauled completely. If a male-dominated Church had presumed to deliberately deny competent and pious women a place in the sacerdotal ministry in contradiction to the express command of the Lord and the Apostles, then, nothing her Fathers, Councils and hierarchy in general is worthy of trust. If, on the basis of male pride, the Church has developed a false anthropology along with an erroneous conception of “the order of nature” and “the order of redemption,” Orthodoxy is guilty of fraud and deceit. There is nothing in her to believe. .

But if we are not so cynical, if we have not caught the virus of modernism; and if we confess the Orthodox Faith as the historical Agent of the Holy Spirit, the Ark of salvation, then, we are assured that the absence of women from the leadership of the Church is part of “*the Faith once delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3). We would necessarily

hold, therefore, that only a man may represent Christ, as only a woman may represent the Church, a parallel anticipated by Adam and Eve, the masculine Yahweh and the female Israel. Therefore, a woman priest would “turn everything upside down” (*panta ano kai kato ginetai*), to borrow a phrase from St John Chrysostom.

## ONE IN CHRIST

*“For you are the children of God by the Faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one all one in Christ Jesus.”* Galatians 3:26-28 is currently viewed by many Christian writers as the Biblical manifesto of “gender equality.” This, along with this and other such verses, form the basis of the argument for the admission of women to the priesthood.<sup>33</sup>

But these words do not say the sexes are equal or the same, but “*one in Christ.*” And, to be sure, St Paul did not write “*unto the churches in Galatia*” in order to announce the “equality” of women in Christ, certainly not in the modern sense. He tells them and us that within the Church there are many roles, but all exist to foster unity in the Spirit. In the specific case of women, writes R.T. Beckwith, “the normal role of woman has been as wife and mother, and her normal sphere the home.”<sup>34</sup> I am not certain that Beckwith has gone far enough. Motherhood is not so much a “role” or “ministry” as it is something inherent to the female gender itself. Surely, that is the reason that the Orthodox Church thinks of “virgins” or nuns (female monastics) as more than women.

Men and women bear “the image of God” and, therefore, they share the same humanity. What is common to them transcends the biological differences. Nevertheless, what they possess in common does not eliminate physical and emotional differences between them. God has grounded gender in nature (creation). It is written on our bodies, and it will not disappear at the resurrection (redemption), nor will deification erase their distinct identifies. The righteous will spend eternity with the blessed Trinity as men and women. Monasticism is a type of the future existence, inasmuch as they live on earth as the angels, “*neither giving nor taking in marriage*” (Matt. 22:30).

On earth, at least, our oneness in Christ does not outlaw many members and offices. “*For by one Spirit are we baptized into one body, whether we are Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, and all have been made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member but many,*” as St Paul teaches the Church at Corinth (12:12-13). In the words of St Justin Martyr, Galatians teaches that the Church lives by one Spirit, one Faith, as “one man” (*Dial.c Trypho*, ch. 116 PG 6 745A. Nevertheless, the one Church has many offices or ministries. “*Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular,*” Paul writes.” *And God has set some in the church first to be apostles, secondarily, prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, etc.* (12: 27-31). Each person has his duty and his rank, the highest of these the “elders” or “presbyters,” generic term for the leaders of the Church. There is nothing here that leads us to conclude that the Holy Spirit has reduced the members and their duties of the Church to an abstract sameness.

The Fathers make very plain the meaning of unity or “*oneness in Christ.*” “This is the purpose of the great mystery for us,” wrote St Gregory the Theologian. “This is the

purpose in God, who for us was made man and became poor, to raise our flesh, and recover His image, remodeling man that we might all be made one in Christ (Gal. 3:28). He was made perfectly one in all of us what He Himself is, that we might no longer be male or female, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free (which are badges of the flesh), but rather bear in ourselves the stamp of God, by whom and for whom we were made, and have so far received our form and model from Him..." (Ora VII, 23 PG 35 783C). In other terms, gender characteristics are not relevant to our unity or salvation in Christ.

St John Chrysostom says the same: "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" We have all become sons of God. Since Christ is the Son of God; and thus having put Him on, you have the Son within you. You are fashioned according to His pattern. You are kindred in nature with Him. In other words, *'There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ.'* We are all the children of God through the Faith. Paul does not stop there; but tries to find something more exact which may serve to describe our oneness...he comments that *'You are all one in Jesus Christ,'* meaning that you have all one form and mould with Christ Himself. What can be more wondrous than these words! He that was a Greek, or a Jew, or a bondsman yesterday, now carries about in himself the form, not of an Archangel, but of the Lord of all, displaying Christ in himself" (Comm. On Gal., III, v. 28 NPNF ).

St Ambrose of Milan likewise stressed the unity of those who have been incorporated into Christ. "And these indeed were you, but *'you are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of God'* (I Cor. 6:11). How many instances of this need I produce? For it is written *'you are all one in Christ'* (Gal. 3:28)... *'sanctified in Christ'* (I Cor. 1:2)... *'you have the righteousness of God in Him* (2 Cor. 5:21..." (Of the Holy Spirit II, viii, 74 NPNF). St Hilary of Poitiers likewise associates Gal. 3:28 with oneness in Christ, but links it with the common will of believers and their participation in the Sacraments. "For the Apostle shows that the unity of the Faithful arises from the Sacraments when he writes to the Galatians, *'For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus'*... That these are one among such diversity of race, condition, sex — is from an agreement of will or from the unity in the sacraments, since they all have one baptism and put on Christ..." (On the Trinity., VIII, 8 NPNF).

St Leo the Great also connects oneness in Christ with baptism. "And because through the transgression of the first man the entire stock of humanity was tainted, no one can be freed from the state of the old Adam, save through Christ's sacrament of baptism. Therefore, the Apostles says, *'For as many of you as were baptized into Christ put on Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, but you are all one in Christ Jesus'* (Gal. 3:27-28... Behold how the grace of God makes what is unequal equal, whatever their labors in this life.." (Ep. XV, 11 NPNF). God does not look upon His children by virtue of their race, nationality, class or gender, but to their identity with His Son. Their "equality" is the consequence of their membership in the Church — not through any political solution. This equality before God cannot be found outside the Church. Only in her are we *"Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise"* (Eph. 3:29).

Whoever is baptized into Christ has the same value before God and, to be sure, each must pay equally, “*a ransom for his soul*” (Exodus 30:15). The Sacraments work unity in Christ, but the process of salvation also requires human effort: a common Faith and a common will. They are bestowed upon us as a pledge or earnest of the promised kingdom, of the good things to come. In this Divine-human synergy or covenant the Faithful are prepared for the Kingdom of heaven wherein the saved are like angels “*neither giving nor taking in marriage.*”<sup>35</sup> The promises of the future, however, do not entitle us to jump to the conclusion that we must begin now to revise the doctrinal imperatives of Tradition in favor of a new understanding of the sexes and their place in the Church. For the present, there is no “democracy” in the Church. Patriarchy and the hierarchy are a permanent feature of the earthly Church, which extends from the “order of creation” through the “order of redemption.”

To summarize, Galatians 3:28 nowhere supports male/female egalitarianism in the functioning of the Church. It is not, as some writers think, the last word on the subject of female equality. St Paul unambiguously teaches in all his letters the subordination of the female to the male. He recognizes the distinction between male and female as taught by Genesis; and, also, that it is through this condition, perpetuated in the new covenant, as soteriologically essential. In other words, we are not free to profess that St Paul was speaking only for his time or that the holy Fathers failed to explore certain areas of Christian anthropology sufficiently.<sup>36</sup> If they did not examine various aspects of human nature it is best to respect their silence.

## THE CREATED ORDER

The book of Genesis is, among other things, the source of Christian anthropology. The elements in the story of man’s creation are historical. Moses records that God crowned His creation with the formation of human beings. He made a man and a woman, body and soul. The man He made first. “*Let us make man after our image and likeness...*” (Gen. 1:26). “*Male and female,*” Moses says, although as yet Eve had not yet come into being,” explains St Symeon the New Theologian, “but instead was yet within in Adam’s side, co-existing with him.”<sup>37</sup> According to St John of Damascus, “He creates with His own hands man of a visible and invisible nature, and after His own image and likeness: on the one hand man’s body He formed of earth, and on the other, his noetic and thinking soul. He bestowed upon him by His own inbreathing, and this is what we mean by ‘after His image.’ For the phrase ‘*after His image*’ clearly refers to the side of his nature which consists of mind and free will, whereas ‘*after His likeness*’ means similarity in virtue, as far as that is possible”<sup>38</sup>

Man’s affinity to God by virtue of his “*image*” did not involve a natural immortality. The first man was neither mortal nor immortal, as St Ephraim the Syrian observes.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, the “*image*” involved dominion over the earth, signified by his naming the animals. “Adam was given rule over the earth. He was lord over all things on earth, according to the blessing which the Creator gave him on that [6<sup>th</sup>] day.”<sup>40</sup> St John Chrysostom agrees. “So ‘*image*’ refers to the matter of control...God created man as having control over everything on earth, and nothing on earth is greater than man, under whose authority it falls. ‘*Man*’ refers to both male and female... ‘Nonetheless, it is not proper for a man to cover his head as the image and glory of God; whereas the

woman is man's glory (I Cor. 11:7). One is in command, the other is subordinate, just as God had said to the woman, *'Your yearning shall be for you husband, and he shall be your master'* (Gen. 3:16). You see, since it is on the basis of command that the "image" was received and not on the basis of form, man commands everything whereas woman is subservient. Thus, Paul's words about man, that he is constituted God's image and glory whereas the woman is *'the glory of the man'* (Hom. On Gen. VIII, 10 PG 53 656).

What, then, is their relationship? God said, *"It is not good that the man should be alone, let us make for him a helpmate suitable to him...And God brought a trance upon Adam, and he slept, and a rib which He took from him God formed into a woman. He brought her to Adam. And Adam said, This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of her man (andros). Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh"* (Gen. 2: 18. 22-24). In the words of St Paul, *"For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man"* (I Cor. 11: 8-9). Male and female share the same nature and together govern the world. Nevertheless, he is the "leader" ("the one in front," in Hebrew, *neged*) from the beginning, evidenced by the fact that he named her "woman" — and "naming" is the sign of authority. She was, "in all things, to be subject to her husband, and...he the head of his wife, that they may live according to Thy will."<sup>41</sup>

Not for nothing did God call the first human being "man" and not "woman." Neither was it by accident that the male was created larger, stronger, bolder, and swifter than the female. It was from him ("one man") that all "man-kind" emerged, even as all who believed on Christ are re-collected in Him to form a redeemed humanity ("one man"). Noteworthy, too, is the fact that Adam was not given the neutral name "person," but man or male; neither was Christ. He was formed outside the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:7); and only later placed him there. The woman was formed from Adam in the Garden (Paradise), where God commanded them to *"increase and multiply."* Eve was *"the mother of all the living"* as bringing forth their progeny, suggesting her principle function was motherhood. God permitted them to eat from all the trees of the Garden, save from the fruit of the tree in its midst, lest they die.

She was the first to sin; or, as St Ephraim said, *"Eve, who had been the mother of all the living, became the fountain of death for all the living."*<sup>42</sup> Moses records that the woman was approached by a "serpent," tempting her to eat from the forbidden fruit. She acquiesced and gave the fruit to her husband and he ate. Why did the serpent not go to the man first, since he was the head of the woman? St Gregory the Theologian comments that the devil believed he could arouse vanity in the woman, and using Adam's tender feeling for her, induce him to eat. The devil's calculation was right. Adam "forgot the commandment which had been given to him, he yielded to the baleful fruit" (On the Theophany, 12 PG 36 324C). St John Chrysostom maintains that the devil came to the "naïve and weaker vessel, namely, the woman who he drew into his deception by means of conversation" (Hom. On Gen. XVI, 3 PG 53 129). St Ephraim the Syrian says that the serpent or the devil avoided Adam "out of fear." He went to the subordinate woman and caused her to envy the man. "She hastened to eat before her husband that she might become head over her head, that she might become the one to give command to that one by whom she was commanded; and that she might be older in divinity than the one who was older in humanity."<sup>43</sup>

Eve's envy brought sin into the world even before she and her husband had consumed the forbidden fruit. If nothing else, the implication is that the devil knew who the head of the human race was, and why we call this calamity "the fall of Adam." By her disobedience to God, and usurpation of the man's headship, Eve became the occasion for the fall; nevertheless, "He could have rebuked her," declares St John Chrysostom, "but chose to be her partner in the fall, depriving himself of the divine benefits on account of a brief pleasure" (Hom on Genesis XVI, ib).

That God called to Adam (and not to Eve), "*Where are you?*" implies that He blamed Adam for the "original sin," that is to say, the primacy belongs to the man. He was responsible for the expulsion of our first-parents from paradise, because he was "*the head of the woman.*" His disobedience brought death, sin and corruption to his posterity. But also Eve's sin became a pattern for the future. Seeking to control him, she unleashed misery upon the human race. The woman, no longer the man's complement, becomes his competitor. God also punished her with the words, "*I will greatly multiply your pain and your groaning: in pain you shall bring forth children, and your submission shall be to your husband and he shall rule over you*" (Gen. 3: 17).

To Adam, God said, "*Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and eaten of the tree which I had forbidden you to touch, cursed be the grounds of your labor. With pain shall you eat of it all the days of your life... In the seat of your face shall you eat your bread until you return to the earth*" (Gen. 3: 18-20). God also cursed the serpent, making him lower than all the brutes of the earth, and putting "*enmity between you and the women, between our seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel*" (Gen. 3: 15-16). This scene plays out not only in the drama of man's fall from grace, but is the anti-type of his restoration: Christ the new Adam, Eve the Church, with the serpent or the devil, the enemy of the human race vanquished on the Cross ("the tree"). And, to be sure, those who might have become gods through obedience of the first Adam, shall become gods (2 Pet. 1:4) because the new Adam was "*obedient even unto the Cross.*"

The Garden, Chrysostom tells us, was a type of the Age to Come. Adam and Eve were a type or anti-type of Christ and the Church. Also, the establishment of Israel as the Bride of Yahweh is a shadow of the Church as the Spouse of Christ, which was born from the side of the crucified Christ. She was formed of the blood and water that poured from Him (Enc. Max.. 3 PG 51 229). Adam and Eve are the prototype of every man and woman. Christ and the Church are the prototype of every "new creature," that is, every baptized man and woman. They are "one flesh." To the typology of Eve and the Church, belongs another comparison: between "the Virgin Eve and the Virgin Mary." The first is a type of the Church, the second is the Church and, in a sense, the model of every Christian woman.

All that is prophesied in the Old Testament concerning the Church, according to the holy Fathers, receives simultaneous application to the Mother of God, beginning with Eve. St Justin Martyr says "that He [Christ] was born of the Virgin so that the evil caused by the serpent might be destroyed in the same manner that it originated. For Eve, an undefiled Virgin, conceived the word of the serpent, and brought forth disobedience and death; but the Virgin Mary, filled with faith and joy, when the angel Gabriel announced to her the good tiding that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon her, and 'the power of the most High would overshadow her,' and, therefore, the Holy One born of her would be

the Son of God, replied *'Be it done to me according to thy word'* (Dial. c. Tryp., 100 PG 6 709D-712A).

The disobedient Eve, continued St Irenaeus of Lyons, was deceived by a (fallen) angel, the obedient Mary “by angelic communication received the glad tidings of God to her who had exhibited obedience. Unlike Eve who was disobedient, the Virgin Mary was obedient that she might become the advocate of the virgin Eve. And thus, the human race fell into death’s bondage by means of one virgin, but rescued by another” (Adv. Haer. V, xix, 1 PG 7 [12] 116B-117A; III, xxii, 4 PG 7 [1] 958D-960A). Eve was mother of the old humanity, the Mother of God is the mother of the new humanity, that is, Mother of those reborn in Christ.

In the words of St Leo the Great, “For today [Nativity] the Maker of the world was born in a Virgin’s womb, and He, Who make all natures, became Son of her, whom He had created.” Moreover, by the Nativity, “we are celebrating the commencement of our own life. The Birth of Christ is the source of life for the Christian People, and the birthday of the Head is the birthday of the body” (Serm. XXVI, 1-2 PL 54 213AB). His body consists of His “brothers and sisters,” “*conformed to the image of His Son,*” who is “*the first-born of many brethren.*” But the undefiled Theotokos is the Mother of the Lord; hence, the Mother of “*all that have been baptized into Christ.*” As the new Eve, Mary is the Church

“How beautiful are those things which have been foretold of Mary under the figure of the Church,” mused St Ambrose of Milan (On Virginity, XIV, 89 PL 16 341B).<sup>44</sup> St Methodius of Olympus took delight in “identifying the Virgin as the Church” (Symp. 7 PG 18 381AB). St Cyril of Alexandria sang the praises of “Mary, the ever-Virgin, the holy Church” (Hom. Div., 4 PG 77 996C). Mary begot Christ, said the Venerable Bede; yet every time a person becomes a Christian, “Christ is born again” (In Apoc. PL 93 165-166); thus, new sons and daughters for the Church, more children for Mary. Having aid all this about the Theotokos — the type of the female Eve, the type of the female Israel, she is the Church. She is, according to St Ephraim the Syrian, the Mother, Sister, Daughter, Bride of the Incarnate Lord. “I became His Mother and by a second birth, I brought Him forth, so did He bring me forth by a second baptism.”<sup>45</sup>

In every case, her role is feminine. Her Son and Lord is masculine. His Mother gave birth to Him virginally. The Church gives birth to her children virginally, i.e., baptism. In imitation of the Church (and Eve), motherhood is the primary function of the women, as the Orthodox rite of Matrimony stresses. Obedience and subordination win her salvation, as the Virgin’s Magnificat teaches.<sup>46</sup> The point cannot be made too often: woman is the image of the female Church — the Theotokos —and man is the image of the male Christ; and on the male gender alone has He bestowed the priesthood.

## CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

The Church is “*a great mystery*” (Eph. 5:32), “*even the mystery which has been hidden from before the ages, but now is made manifest unto the saints*” (Col. 1:26). The mystery is “*the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which he hath purposed in Himself: that in the economy of the fullness of times, He might bring all things under one head in Christ (ana-kephalai-osathai ta panta in Christo) what is on earth and what is in the heavens, even in Him Whom we have received an inheritance...*”

(Eph. 1:9-11). There will come a moment in the history of the creation that *“all things shall be put under His feet, by which God gave Him to be the head (kephalen), which is His Body [the Church], the fullness of Him that fills all things”* (Eph. 1: 21-22). The “mystery” is God’s eternal plan of salvation, executed *in Christo*, that is, His recovery of the cosmos from the devil and its transformation (*metamorphosis*) by His Uncreated Energies. All that is reconciled and deified shall form His eternal Kingdom, His Church or Body, over which He shall be the eternal Head.

Man and woman, differentiated and complementary, reflect the eternal mystery.<sup>47</sup> The mystery is shown in the creation of man and woman, the mating of Yahweh and Israel, and finally incarnated in Christ and the Church as “one flesh.” This last union is not a temporary relationship, even as marriage between man and woman that is purportedly indissoluble, typifying the “oneness” of Christ and the Church. The book of the Apocalypse (21:2) announces that at the end of time, *“the New Jerusalem will descend from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”* The final Judgment accomplished, all things having been put under His feet, the righteous with all the angels will form a wedding escort to meet Him. Their joy will be consummated with a celestial banquet. Christ and His Church, the eternal Man and the eternal Woman will be joined by everlasting participation in the divine Nature.

The marriage of Christ (male) and the Church (female) is the central symbol in the New Testament. Christ Himself hinted at this truth with the question, *“Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?”* (Matt. 2:19). Later, He said, *“The Kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a marriage feast for his son...”* (Matt. 22:2-3). *“The kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom”* (Matt. 25:1). As the other prophets of the Old Testament (e.g., Hosea 2: 8; Is. 1:21-26, etc.), St John the Baptizer foretells the coming of the Messiah, *“I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him. He that has the bride has the bridegroom. The friend of the Bridegroom, who stands and hears Him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom.”* (John 3:28-29). Yet, it is not until His Resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit that the Church is identified: *“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ”* (2 Cor. 11:2). In other terms, the male role of Christ and the female role of the Church belong to the mystery of redemption, that is, the recovery and sanctification of all creation.

It is with this premise that in his letter to the Ephesians (5:22-32) that the Apostle Paul associates “headship” in the marriage covenant with the male. *“Wives submit yourselves (hypotassethe) to your husbands. For the husband is the head (kephale) of the wife, as Christ (kephale) is the Head of the Church. He is the Savior of the Body. Therefore as the Church is subject (hypotassetai) to Christ, let wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church; and gave Himself for her: that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing...So ought men love their wives as their own bodies...”* If we take these verses as they stand, there is no dispute that the husband is the head of the wife, as the male Christ is spouse to the female Church. It ought to be certain also that salvation to the woman comes through her obedience to her husband, even as the service of the husband to his wife leads to his salvation. Hence, the words of the Orthodox rite of

Matrimony, “grant that this handmaid may be subject to her husband, and that this Thy servant may be head to his wife, that they may live according to Thy Will.”<sup>48</sup>

Self-evident or not, there has been some controversy over the word “head” in these verses. The phrase “*the head of the woman is the man*” is found in I Cor. 11:3 and I Pet. 1:3-7. . It is linked to the word “submission” or “subordination” (*hypotage*, noun), “to subject oneself, to be under obedience” (“*hypotassesthai*, passive), “to put under subjection (*hypotassein*, infinitive). There are not a few seminary professors who wish to translate “head” (*kephale*) as “source,” not “authority.” They rely on such Greek expressions as “the source (*kephale*) of the river.” in the writings of Herodotus, and other Greek historian.<sup>49</sup> In the case of New Testament lexicons, however, and the Septuagint, the Fathers,<sup>50</sup> even Plutarch the word is *he kephale* is rendered “authority.”

If *kephale* is reduced to “source,” the conclusion that the woman is subservient to the man or wife to her husband may be avoided, but that raises other problems. On account of the analogy between Christ and husband, it is also necessary to view the “*headship*” of the Lord Himself over the Church as “source” rather than the traditional “sway” or “authority” or “dominion.” What, then, of Colossians 2:10 that says that Christ is “*the head of all rule and authority*”? Shall we translate the phrase as “the *source* of all rule and authority”? In point of fact, “source” and “head” are synonymous. As Creator, Providence, and King, He is the “source” of all “rule and authority.” In the same way, the bishop is the “source” of power or authority in the Church is the bishop. To cite St Ignatius of Antioch, without the bishop “nothing can be done without his approval” He has received from God the spiritual power (*charisma*) by which he rules his flock, either directly or through his presbyter (To the Smyrnaens, 8).

Thus, considering that Christ and the Church, Bridegroom and Bride, is the manifestation of “*the great mystery*,” it is impossible for a woman to be “head” of the local church. She would be “head” to a “body” (female), a relationship which must construed as lesbian. In any case, “headship” was bestowed on the man and she was given to him as helpmate. Woman takes the subordinate role. It is a voluntary obedience, even as God the Son “emptied Himself,” became man, subjecting Himself to the Father for our salvation. In the same way, the voluntary obedience of the woman to the man is to exalt them both.

## HIERARCHY OF THE COSMOS

There is no reason to call the teachings of I Cor 11: 2- 16 “Pauline.” The Apostle specifies when he speaks for himself; it is not mandatory. Here he directs the Corinthians “*to keep the traditions as I delivered them to you.*” Whose traditions are they? They are not the traditions of men, but the beliefs of the Church that Paul received from the other Apostles and God Himself. If he did not transmit them precisely as he obtained them, some or all “*the Faith once delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3) would be lost with his innovation. The Saint declared there is but one “gospel” to which even angels must be obedient (Gal. 1:8). He gave His “brethren” a Tradition in which involved, among other things, a picture of reality as hierarchical.

To begin, St Paul reminded the Corinthians that “*the Head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the Head of Christ is God*” (v. 3). Note “*every man*” (*pantos andros*) not merely Christian men. The verse, “*the head of the*

*woman is the man,*” points to Adam and Eve, the prototypes (or anti-types) of both genders. Christ had not only restored the fallen world, but also introduced it to a new Age. To be sure, the Christian man is not the master of the Christian woman, despite his “headship.” They enjoy a relationship that leads to salvation. Finally, above every level of being — above the angels, the Theotokos, the martyrs and the saints in Abraham’s Bosom, the entire ecclesiastical hierarchy, male and female — is God the Father Who has taken dominion over the universe through the risen Christ in His Church (Eph. 1: 22-23).

Verse 4 tells us that “*every man praying or prophesying with his head covered dishonors his head; but every woman that prays or prophecies with her head uncovered dishonors her head.*” The covering is more than the recognition of her husband’s “headship.” To pray (or worship) or prophecy with an uncovered head is the same as if the woman were shaven. “*For if the woman is not covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn (or shaven), let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head or inasmuch as he is the image and glory of god: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of the angels*” (vv. 4-10).

Here is another component of “the prescription of veils” that calls upon all females, young and old, to cover their heads, especially at public worship.<sup>51</sup> Angels are present at the divine Services; and it is an offense to them to see the immodesty of women that an uncovered female head represents. Furthermore, St Paul was compelled to mention the practice of head covering in order to counter the Gnostic influence on the Corinthian Church. Here was a heretical sect “*which crept into the house and led silly women captive.*” They “*were ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*” (2 Tim. 3: 6-7). Women were encouraged by the Gnostics to discard traditional roles in favor of “egalitarianism” that must have involved, among other things, dispensing with their “veils”— the objections of their bishop and husbands notwithstanding.

As St John Chrysostom suggests, the Christian women of Corinth were not faithful and steadfast. For their return to piety, the Apostle was required to repeat what they already knew about the liturgical practices of the Church. A person committed to the Faith is “content with the tradition alone. He that is weaker, when he learns about the matter, both retains what is said with more care and obeys with much more readiness in the future” (Comm. On I Cor., hom. XXVI, 1 PG 61 213). The loss of fidelity to the Church inevitably begins with a change of language and contempt for the most innocent symbols.

## HANDMAID OF THE LORD

To achieve the admission of women to the priesthood would be to diminish the power and purpose of the gospel. The witness of the Fathers and the Councils, the Confessors and martyrs, canonists and iconographers would be obfuscated if not abolished. The advocates of women priests are quick, it seems, to dismiss the judgment of holy people on the subject of women as biased and incomplete. Egalitarians want us to believe that the male leaders of the Church have, with regard to women’s concerns, understood the Old and New Testaments in the same way for so long that they are

incapable of distinguishing between male prejudice and divine verity. If they are right, the Orthodox Church is not God's Church. Perhaps, too, there is no reason to become the priestesses of a pseudo-church.

Even worse, if contemporary Orthodoxy were to change its religious legacy — however noble the purpose — the generations to which it passed the altered legacy, would have a precedent with which to make changes of their own, until finally any link with the Apostles would be lost. The past would be closed to us. What we believe and how we ought to behave would be determined by the most and loudest voices. Power, not faith would command. So, let us hope that Orthodox women, *et al.* come to this realization, and abandon the notion that the male priesthood was initially a carry over from Hellenism or Judaism; an influence, egalitarians argue, which explains the Church's historic sexism, which accounts for the exclusion of women from the priesthood.

Moreover, if such arguments prevail, if the egalitarians manage to persuade others to support them, including synods and bishops; if they succeed in neutralizing those Biblical verses, such as I Cor. 14: 34-35 and I Tim. 2: 8-15 (which forbids them to preach to men, teach men, and celebrate the divine Liturgy), the priestess would gain their objective, and irreparably deform the Christian religion, with no little help from of "inclusive language."<sup>52</sup> At the same time, they will have brought religious and secular forces into play for which no one will be able to control in the future.

We have already examined some of the reasons for the Church's attitude, let us look now at the "notorious" verses mentioned above. First, however, something needs to be said to those who contend that St Paul did not write second Corinthians and first Timothy. The books of the New Testament were chosen by the Church to be placed within the canon of Scripture, because those gospels, letters and histories accurately reflect the teachings of holy Tradition. Tradition does not rest on Scripture, but Scripture on Tradition. The "controversial passages" concur with teachings and practices of Tradition.

Tradition teaches the Church that women cannot be priests. The Scriptures, God's written word, only confirm it. Obviously, it is impossible for women to be priests if they are not permitted to speak — hence, cannot preach — in the church. "*Let your women keep silence in the churches,*" St Paul insists, "*for it is not permitted for them to speak, but to be under obedience, as also says the Law.*" He does not rest his case on the Jewish Law — as many of his critics says — but finds corroboration in it; hence, the expression, "*as also (kai) says the Law*" (Deut. 25:4; 28:49; Isa. 28:11). Obviously, if they cannot speak, they cannot ask questions. "*Therefore, if they want to learn anything, let them learn from their husbands at home* (or, if unmarried, acquire answers from a male relative or friend). *It is a shame for women to speak in the church*" (I Cor. 14: 34-35).

The Apostle absolutely forbids women to speak during the worship of the Church, which includes not only preaching or reading, but also all ecstatic and edifying discourse. He intensifies his command with the word "shame" (*aischron*). Women are to be silent in church as a matter of principle.<sup>53</sup> Even the prophesying of women occurred outside the liturgical assembly of believers. Later, the Apostle writes to St Timothy that he wants all men (*andras*) "*to pray with the lifting of holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*" He turns his attention to the current problem with admonitions related to the conduct of men. "*In like manner, let the women (gyne) adorn themselves in decent apparel, with modesty and sobriety...*" "*Let women learn in all silence and submission (hypotage). I suffer not a*

woman to teach, nor to take authority over men.” Does he think that women are inferior or incapable of speaking well or piously? Genesis provides him with part of the answer. “*For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived but the woman. Being deceived she was in transgression.*”

St John Chrysostom follows St Paul in his reasoning. “‘*But I suffer a woman not to teach,*’ that is, ‘. Saying this, women are not permitted to teach, but occupy the station of learners will show submission by their silence.” He caricatures woman as “naturally somewhat talkative; and for this reason restrains them on all sides.” Their loquacity is not the reason for their treatment. “‘*For Adam,*’ he says, ‘*first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in transgress.*’ If anyone asks, what has this to do with woman of the present day? It shows that the male sex enjoys the higher honor. Man was formed first and elsewhere this superiority is shown. ‘*Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man*’ (I Cor. 11:9). Why does Paul say this? He wishes the male to have preeminence in every way...Let him have precedence, on account of what occurred in the Garden...For the woman taught the man once, and made him guilty of disobedience and wrought our ruin. Therefore, because she made bad use of her power over the man, or rather her equality with him, God made her subject to her husband... “ (Comm. On Tim. Hom., IX, 2 NPNF).

Paul ties his discourse to the question of woman’s salvation. “*Notwithstanding, she shall be saved through childbearing, if she continues in faith and love, holiness and sobriety*” (I Tim. 2: 8-9, 11-15). He purposefully relates these remarks to those that he made about women’s attire. In what he writes to St Timothy, the Apostle reaffirms what he conveyed to the Church at Corinth. He observes that the community led by Timothy has likewise neglected traditional church order. Among other things, women adorn and dress themselves immodestly. They also refused to be silent and to respect the station and authority of their husbands; and Christian men in general. The problem of his flock was the desire of some women for “emancipation” from their husbands. We may surmise that they even wanted to be priests, the result of listening to false teachers (Gnostics) who encouraged them to rebel against the restrictions placed on their behavior and dress.

Evidently, Paul’s calling women back to silence and submission excludes them from offices of bishop or presbyter.<sup>54</sup> By extension, women were barred from any ecclesiastical office that might place them in authority over men. This would be the case even if her husband gave her permission to occupy such a position. One might wonder if the priesthood was available to Corinthian women, would they have continued, as priestesses, to obey their husbands? Would they have covered their heads during prayer and worship; or would they expect their husbands to comply with their decision as a call from God? Would they accept her authority over him, kiss her hand, take her obediences and blessings, and, if necessary, make confession to her. Of course, they would have worn no beard. .

If this were the case, St Paul’s command to women would be nonsense. For them “*to learn in silence and with full submission*” would have no meaning for them, as it has none for so many now. The Apostle has more to say. The woman’s subordination is not her husband alone, or else he would have used the definite article or possessive pronoun with *man* — “*I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over her man or her own (idiosis) husband*” (Cf. Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18-19). The implication of “*the head of the*

*woman is the man*” (I Cor. 11: 3) refers to the preeminence of the male throughout social order.

I would be curious to watch egalitarians economize Canon 70 of Quinisext. It repeats St Paul almost word for word (“Let it not be permitted for women to talk during the divine Liturgy., etc.). St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain considers it significant that the word “talk” and not “speak” is used by the Apostle. “For ‘talk’ includes any sort of vocal utterance, and not merely articulate speech. In fact, women are not allowed to let their voice be heard at all within the sacred temple of the church. They may, of course, sing and chant in their hearts praises and blessings to God, but not with their lips.” She may not do what the man does, because she is helpmate not his superior. “Woman is the teacher of every virtue by word and deed within her own province at home; but she is not allowed even to speak or sing within the sacred precincts of the church. Woman’s job is to bear children and to rear them in the belief and love of God,” he concludes, “to uphold the sanctity and sobriety of marriage...”<sup>55</sup>

St Paul intrinsically associated the salvation of women with virtuous motherhood (I Tim. 2:15). Nevertheless, women in the primitive Church were not all married. Their calling was sometimes higher. Some like SST Znaida and Philonella, Paul’s cousins, were physicians, generally to other women. SST Phoebe and Priscilla were co-workers with the Apostle Paul.<sup>56</sup> They ordinarily dealt with other women, carrying out their work in an informal home setting, not in public assembly, and not without the supervision of male elders. In I Timothy 2 (and elsewhere). Paul delineates role distinctions, because everyone in the Church should have a ministry. He was also in possession of those theological principles or criteria that let him determine the nature of woman’s service most befitting her subordination, and for the man’s service befitting his authority. What God has done, why He created man one way and woman another, why He has ordained their ministries as the Church has always had them, we do not know. If I may repeat, it would seem, that “gender roles” reflect the order of creation and the order of redemption; indeed, the mystery of our salvation.

## CONCLUSION

Orthodoxy is a hierarchical world-view. She conceives reality as steps — a “ladder” that ascends to God. As we saw in St Paul’s first letter to the church at Corinth, the man occupies the higher rung relative to the woman He was formed first, from the virgin soil of the earth. She was made from the man and for the man, even as the Church was made from and for Christ. Some might conclude that a higher station means the man is better and superior to the woman. Judging from what the Fathers say, in matters of piety woman has proven herself to be the greater. “O nature of woman overcoming man in the common struggle for salvation,” writes St Gregory the Theologian, “and demonstrating that the distinction between male and female is one of body, not of soul” (Ora. XVIII, 8 PG 35 993D-994A). In the end, it is holiness or the lack of it that is the source of power in the Church.

Woman’s quest for “equality” by the acquisition of rank in the Church manifests the popular mentality. I refer specifically to the democratic ideal that expects not to find in a crowd one head above the other. To be sure, “All men/women are created equal,” if we define “equal” to mean the same human nature, both sexes stamped with the divine

Image. “Equality” cannot be defined, however, as identity in ability, intelligence or beauty or strength, or function. It is also true that, God placed the man at the apex of the physical creation, and that “patriarchy” or the leadership of men is the natural order. Not entirely incidental is the fact that anthropologists have discovered that patriarchy is allied with “the development of monotheism.”<sup>57</sup> If this is true, then, it is not improbable that polytheism (or religious pluralism) is related to democracy.

According to the democratic notion of equality, one individual has the same “rights” as any other. I do not argue with that sentiment, but human and civil rights are not concepts relevant to the order of the priesthood. Incidentally, not every historian or philosopher has agreed on the positive merit and desirability of “equal rights,” especially when it rests on the shifting sands of positive law, which itself is constantly shaken by the capricious winds of representative government. That aside, we need to understand that democracy and hierarchy involve antithetical world-views. The one will necessarily depict the place of women in the Church and the world differently from the other. Democratic egalitarianism finds absurd any objection to woman’s ordination as the result of institutional sexism. “Unfair! Unfair!” would seem to be its cry against male preeminence. Orthodoxy, on the other hand, gazes upon hierarchy as the fixed cosmic and divine Order of things. Admission of women to the priesthood is rebellion against that Order.

Again, their description of “women’s concerns” suggests that they want an “equality” with men that necessarily implies, if not require, careers and “liberation” from the home and children. I assume that Orthodox women would not go so far, and if they chose to work outside the home, would pursue activities, jobs and professions consistent with the Christian piety. If they imitate most women in democratic societies, it will not be easy for them to acquire sanctity. I am disconcerted by the prospect of Orthodox women in military combat, FBI agents or movie actresses? This kind of freedom not only virilizes women, but must eventually lead to the democratization of the earthly Church.. As Fr Schmemmann once observed, “The Church is a hierarchy, not a democracy.” Unfortunately, there are too many Orthodox women — often with the support of the male leadership in their churches — who have adopted the thinking of K. Stendahl (former Dean of Harvard Seminary), “If emancipation (of women) is right, then, there is no valid ‘biblical’ reason not to ordain women. Ordination cannot be treated as a ‘special’ problem, since there is no indication that the New Testament sees it as such.”<sup>58</sup> To take his advice would not only signal the overthrow Orthodox hierarchism, but the conformity of the Church to the world.

I have no doubt that if advocates of woman’s ordination succeed, they will use their version of church history to determine what kind of religion Orthodoxy was. They will use their revision of traditional theology to settle what kind of Church she will become — especially in a milieu where relativism and subjectivism have already won the day. To begin, Orthodox theologians have even now felt the need to justify the ordination of women to the priesthood (and eventually the episcopate). They will leave to future generations a pattern and method for any further modifications of the Orthodox Faith. For intellectual purposes, they will adopt some form of “doctrinal development.” Has not Madam Behr-Sigel already endorsed this conception of Tradition with a rhetorical question of her own? “The ordination of women,” she asks, “is it an act of apostasy or a creative development of the living tradition of the Church?”<sup>59</sup>

Their reinterpretation of that Tradition has begun already with a defilement of the Church Fathers. They have ceased to be the arbiters of belief and unbelief for a growing number of the Faithful. Orthodox feminists deny their teachings to be final. “There are some areas of anthropology that the Fathers have not explored sufficiently,” states N. V. Harrison; “and here it will perhaps prove appropriate for the Church to add to their thought, though not to distort or undermine the crucial affirmations on which they are agreed.”<sup>60</sup> She chooses carefully her words, so as not to appear shrewish or disloyal. Moreover, to substantiate their speculations, they turn not to all the Fathers, but to some whom they have decided gives their cause a religious veneer. As already mentioned, they have perversely anointed the Cappadocian Fathers as their champions. They find support for their ambition in what they have written concerning the Image of God.<sup>61</sup>

No Orthodox will dispute the common humanity of men and women. We need to add, however, that the woman was born from the man, not because he is superior, but because God chose Adam as the “source” of unity. The woman is the “mother of all the living,” but she originated with the man. “All things proceed from unity,” St Cyprian wrote somewhere, even as the Son and the Spirit issue from the Father, the *arche* of the Trinity. Christ is the single “source” (*kephale*) of the new humanity. Put another way, it is a false argument that women have been deprived of the priesthood because men would not share with them the control of social institutions. Neither may we believe that too many people for too long have secretly believed that the female was given a different stamp of God’s Image than the man;<sup>62</sup> so that he only bears the “icon” of the Christ and, therefore, he alone is eligible for the priesthood.

The objection is altogether contrived. There is no Father or Council or Patriarch that declared men and women differ in their spiritual natures. Feminists or egalitarians seemed to have unconsciously equated “the image of God” with “the image of Christ.” Men and women are the *imago Dei*, *eikon tou Theou*, but only the man is the “image of Christ,” *imago Christi*, *eikon tou Christou*. St Theodore the Studite (759-826) calls Christ the “archetype” (*archetypou*) of the bishop (or priest, “the image of the image”) who is “icon of Christ” (*eikon tou Theou*) and an “imitation of Christ” (*mimema Christou*) (Ref. Iconom., 4 PG 99 439CD; cf. Ep. 1, 11 PG 99 945D). So it is that only men can be priests.

Reading the books of our Orthodox feminists or egalitarians (call them what you will), they are not zealous for Orthodoxy.<sup>63</sup> It is evident that they do not believe that the Orthodox Church is the Catholic Church, the religion intended by God for all mankind. Further, with the conviction that Orthodoxy is precisely the New Israel, they might look beyond the precincts of their religion for an understanding of its “roots.” It might be beneficial for all to hear the words of St Cyril of Jerusalem once. The Church, he says, “teaches universally and completely one and all the doctrines which ought to come to men’s knowledge concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly... She brings unto godliness all mankind...and because she universally treats and heals the every class of sins, which are committed by soul or body, and possesses in herself every form of virtue which is named, both the deeds and words, and in every kind of spiritual gift.”<sup>64</sup>

## ENDNOTES

\* Most of the quotations from the Fathers are taken from The Ante-Nicene Fathers and Nicene Post Nicene Fathers (ANF, NPNF), The Fathers of the Church (FOC), Ancient Christian Writers (ACW) translations. Otherwise, they are translated from the J.P. Migne collection: the Greek Fathers (PG), the Latin Fathers (PL); also from *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (J.D. Mansi, Paris, 1901-1927.).

1. Bishop Kallistos (Ware), "Man, Woman and the Priesthood of Christ," in Women and the Priesthood. Ed. by T. Hopko. Crestwood (NY), 1999, p. 157. In the 1983 edition, His Grace wrote, "Those...who ordain women as minister...are not however creating priests, but dispensing with the priesthood altogether" (p. 27). In his interview with Teva Regule for St Nina Quarterly 11 June 1997), he not only calls for women "as teachers in the pastoral ministry of the Church," but also they will become deaconesses, readers, chanters and acolytes. He questions the authority of the ecumenical Council to restrict the place of women in the Church. He thinks women should be permitted to enter the sanctuary. He concludes the interview with the remarkable statement that Christ's maleness is of little relevance to the concept of the Christian priesthood.
2. "Defining Ourselves as Orthodox Women," in Orthodox Women Speak: Discerning the Signs of the Times. Ed. by KK. Fitzgerald. Geneva. 1999, p. 157.
3. Madame Behr-Sigel thinks that a "Westernized" Orthodoxy would be more congenial to the idea of the ordination of women to the sacerdotal priesthood. She under the mistaken impression that the "mind" of "the Eastern Church" ought to be stretched (The Ordination of Women in the Orthodox Church. Geneva, 2000, p. 5).
4. "Orthodox Women as Writers," Orthodox Women Speak..., p. 129.
5. "Priestess in the Church?" God in the Dock. Grand Rapids (Mi), 2002, p. 238.
6. See J. Danielou, The Bible and the Liturgy. Notre Dame, 1956, pp. 215-221.
7. Quoted in Manfred Hauke, Women in the Priesthood: A Systematic Analysis in the Light of the Order of Creation and Redemption. Trans. by D. Kipp. San Francisco, 1988, p. 51.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 52. See Pauline Webb, "Address at the Public Meeting in Sexism in the 70s," Ecumenical Woman's Congress. Ed. by E. Moltmann-Wendel. Berlin, 1975.
9. *Loc. Cit.*
10. "The Place of Women in the Orthodox Church and the Question of the Ordination of Women," Inter-Orthodox Theological Consultation. Ecumenical Patriarchate. 9 Dec 1988, pp. 2-3.

11. At the Damascus meeting, the Orthodox and the non-Chalcedonians agreed that male and female babies would be “churched” alike; and women would be deprived of Holy Communion during their menstrual period. They were not required to cover their heads during worship. No canonical reason was given for the abolition of these practices (Orthodox Women Speak..., pp. 7-19).
12. Women in the Priesthood..., p. 254.
13. Behr-Sigel, The Ordination of Women..., p. 2.
14. The “priest” or “presbyter” acts for the bishop. He *re*-presents the bishop to his flocks. He is, so to speak, the icon or image of the image of his Incarnate Prototype. Worthy of note is the distinction between a) the human being as created in “the image [*eikon*] of God; b) the bishop as “the image of Christ”; and c) the icon as sacred art. Men and women were fashioned in “the image and likeness of God” the Son, He Who is d) “the express Image” of God the Father (Heb. 1:3). That relationship between those two Persons of the Trinity is not the same as the relationship between God the Son and the humanity made in His Image. Neither is the relationship between the icon and its prototype the same as the other two distinctions. The “image of God” in man has an entirely noetic or spiritual connotation. God the Son or the Logos is “the express Image” of the Father, something we barely understand; and are only indirectly related to a) or c). Icons or artistic images can only depict what has been seen, while the reverence shown them passes to their prototypes or individuals that were at one time historical persons.
15. Ms Harrison argues that if the only reason women have been excluded from the priesthood is “divine authority,” it “would make God not only arbitrary, but unjust as well. Such conduct cannot reflect his true character” (“Orthodox Arguments for the Ordination of Women as Priests,” Women and the Priesthood, p. 167).
16. Canon 2 of the Quinisext Council ratified as “ecumenical” or “universal” all the Canons of regional Councils as well as those composed by the holy Fathers.
17. For example, Madam Behr-Sigel maintains that the Cappadocian Fathers and St Maximus the Confessor are “the true founders of the doctrine of humankind in Orthodox theology. They strenuously affirm the ontological unity of mankind beyond the distinction between men and women, according to the order of creation” (The Ordination of Women..., p. 2). The Fathers are *witnesses* to the Apostolic Tradition, not the makers of it.
18. If it is correct that the title of “Father of the Church” is applied to Christian writers with the four qualifications — orthodoxy of doctrine, holiness of life, ecclesiastical sanction, and antiquity — there are many writers (Tatian, Origen, Clement, Tertullian, etc.) to whom the appellation “Father” does not apply, if only because their inclusion must abrogate any notion of a patristic consensus (see J. Tixeront,

Handbook of Patrology. Trans. by S.A. Raemers. St Louis, 1951, p. 2). Too many theologians lack “orthodoxy of doctrine” (Augustine, Prosper of Aquitaine, etc.) The qualification of “antiquity” would exclude St Gregory Palamas, St Mark of Ephesus, St Gennadius Scholarius, etc. There are very few Fathers who have received “ecclesiastical sanction.” In any case, it is the Church that decides who speaks for her.

19. Slouching Towards Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and American Decline. New York, 1997, p. 202.
20. The God of the Testaments is Christ, “the Father of the Age to Come” (J.W. Miller, Father and Fathering. Mahway (NJ), 1989, p. 61).
21. Als Mann und Frau Geschaffen: Exegetische Studien zur Rolle der Frau. Berlin, 1978, s. 60.
22. “Priestesses in the Church?” God in the Dock. Grand Rapids (Mi), 1970, p. 237.
23. “The Male Priesthood,” p. 3 (Domestic-Church. Com/CONTENT.DCC/19990501/prst-authority.htm)
24. Woman in the Church. Trans. by M. Teichert. San Francisco, 1979, p. 72.
25. “Orthodox Arguments Against the Ordination of Women as Priests,” p. 165. Ms Harrington might take a cue from Fr Schmemmann. He writes that the question of women in the priesthood is often seen within the perspective of “human rights” and “equality,” etc. — “categories whose ability to adequately express the Christian understanding of man and woman is, to say the least, questionable.” Yet, so long as the priesthood is conceived in terms of power, men hoarding that power, the Church is reduced to a power structure that is controlled by men even as it is in secular society, then, “the alleged inferiority of women within secular society corresponds to their inferiority within the ecclesiastical power structure, hence, their exclusion from the ‘clergy.’ And therefore their liberation in secular society must correspond to their liberation in the Church, i.e., their admission to the priesthood. The Church simply cannot be reduced to these categories. As long as we measure the ineffable mystery of her life by concepts and ideas *a priori* alien to her very essence, we mutilate her and her real power, glory and beauty. Her real life simply escapes us” (Preface to the 1982 edition of Women and the Priesthood. Ed. by T. Hopko. Crestwood [NY], 1999, p. 4).
- 26 The Ordination of Women: An Essay on the Office of the Christian Ministry. Grand Rapids (Mi), 1980, p. 121.
27. Behr-Sigel, E. & Ware, K., The Ordination of Women in the Orthodox Church. Geneva, 2000, p. 1.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
29. The title “equal to the Apostles” later bestowed by the Church on STT Mary Magdalene, Helen, Nina, Olga were honorific. They were in fact neither Apostles nor priests.
30. The Protestant theologian, P.K. Jewett, holds that the Scriptures do not deny women the priesthood. “Tradition,” he thinks, is the source of this discrimination. “Thus the Church has construed the data of revelation in a manner that limited woman’s place in the family of God” (The Ordination of Women, p. 100). Employing language so appealing to the post-modern mind, Jewett describes the task of the “Church” as “transformation and renewal,” instead of clinging to an old and irrelevant ecclesiology which bases the occupation of the priesthood on the “masculinity” of God (*l.c.*).
31. The Rudder. Trans. by D. Cummings. Chicago, 1957, pp. 373-374. St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain cites Lev. 20:18-20 & Ezek. 18:6 on the matter of menstruation; and also, St Nicephorus of Constantinople, St Basil the Great, St Timothy of Alexandria, St John the Fathers, Novel 17 of Leo the Wise.
32. Among many others, J. Karmiris (The Place and Diaconate of Women in the Orthodox Church. Athens, 1978) believes the ministry of the deaconess is “a clearly auxiliary institution in the work of the Church. In every instance, in the ancient Church women did not in fact exercise purely priestly functions” (pp. 47-49). Evangelos Theodorou (‘Cheirotonia’ or ‘Cherotesia’ of the Deaconess? Athens, 1954) that in the early Church the “ordination of the deaconess” was performed in the same way as the ordination of the deacon, with a few notable exceptions (pp. 60-63). Both agree that she could not preside at the Eucharist.
33. R.B. Allen, Liberated Traditionalism: Men and Women in Balance. Portland (Or.), 1985, p.134.
34. “The Office of Woman in the Church to the Present Day,” in Why Not? Priesthood and the Ministry of Women. Ed. by M. Bruce & G.E. Duffield. Appleford, 1976, p.27.
35. Cf. St Athanasius, Four Discourses Against the Arians II, 74 NPNF; St Aphrahat, Selected Demonstrations XXII, 13 NPNF; St Jerome, Ep. 75, 3 NPNF.
36. N.V. Harrison, “Orthodox Arguments Against...,” 179.
37. On the Mystical Life: the Ethical Discourses (vol. 1): The Church and the Last Things. Trans. by A. Golitzen. Crestwood (NY), 1995, pp. 21-22.
38. On the Orthodox Faith II, 12 NPNF.

39. Commentary on Genesis (FOC), I, ii, 17:3.
40. Ibid. I, ii, 3:10. The rite of Holy Matrimony calls the male “a king over the creation” (Service Book of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church. Trans. and Arranged by I.F. Hapgood. Englewood (NJ). 1975, p. 295). Adam was created on the 6<sup>th</sup> day or age of the first week of the earth. Sunday or “one day” (not the “first day”) is both the beginning and end of the week (8<sup>th</sup> day), a circle which typifies the destiny of creation: to begin and end in God. Christ is the second Adam, the beginning and end of the new creation. By his disobedience the first Adam brought the calamity of sin and death upon the earth. By His obedience, the second Adam abolished sin and death and restored the world to His Father. The Incarnation of the Lord, the second Adam, occurred during the 6<sup>th</sup> age or period of universal history. He was resurrected on Sunday-Pascha, a type and earnest of the end (*eschatos*) or the 8<sup>th</sup> and eternal day or Age everlasting (See J. Danielou, The Lord of History: Reflections on the Inner Meaning of History. Trans. by N. Abercrombie. London, 1958, p. 5-9).
41. Service Book..., *Ibid*, p. 296. The relationship patterned not only after Adam and Eve, but Christ and the Church.
42. Homily on the Lord I, 5 (FOC).
43. Comm. On Gen. I, ii, 18:2
44. In the words of St Ambrose, *Sed virgo, quia est Ecclesia typus* (Expos.Evang. s. Luc. II, 7 PL 15 1635D-1636A).
45. Hymns on the Nativity, 9 (FOC).
46. Paul Evokimov perceives the Virgin Mary as the type of all women (Women and the Salvation of the World. Trans. b A.P. Gythiel. Crestwood (NY), 1994).
- 47 Anstall, K., “Male and Female Created He Them,’ An Examination of the Mystery of Human Gender,” in The Mystery of Gender and Human Sexuality. Dewdney (BC), 1996, p. 44.
- 48 Service Book..., p. 296.
- 49 R.S. Cervin, “Does *Kephale* mean ‘ Source’ or ‘Authority’ in Greek Literature? A Rebuttal,” in Trinity Journal 10 NS (1989), p. 12.
- 50 Professor Cervin admits that in Lampe’s Patristic Greek Lexicon, there are many citations referring to Christ as the “Head of the Church,” and a few citations where *kephale* alludes to a bishop. He insists that “the use of *head* in patristic Greek is a technical term primarily pertaining to Christ, and occasionally to members of the ecclesiastical order” (*Ibid.*, p. 107). Virtually every New Testament lexicon agrees that *kephale* means “a person of superior authority” or “rank” or “ruler.”

- 51 Hauke says that “the prescription of veils” is quite obvious not an indispensable component of the original deposit of faith (*depositum fidei*)” (Women in the Priesthood, p. 346.) A Roman Catholic, he affirms The Commentary on the Declaration of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on the Question of the Admission of women to the Ministerial Priesthood (<http://www.ourladywarriors.org/teach/intensi.htm>). It is an appendage to Pope Paul VI’s Inter Isigniores (15 Oct 76) on the same subject. An Orthodox would never presume to delete a teaching of the Apostles (I Cor. 11: 13-15).
- 52 C.S. Lewis observes that “a child who has been taught to pray to a Mother in heaven (as opposed to a Father) would have a religious life radically different from that of a Christian child” (“Priestesses in the Church,” p. 237).
- 53 See St John Chrysostom, Comm. On Titus, hom. 4 NPNF; St Ambrose, De Off. Min. LXV, 230 FOC; St Jerome. Adv. Pel. 1, 25 PL 23 542B; St Cyril of Jerusalem., Procat., 14 PG 33 336B; Ambrosiaster, Comm. On I Cor. ,11 PL 17 253.
- 54 It did not prohibit them making public of faith, to instruct other women, to pray for them or to nurse them.
- 55 The Rudder, pp. 373-375.
- 56 There is some uncertainty about *Junias* (Rom. 16:7), whether this individual was male or female. St Epiphanius considered Junias to be a man, while St John Chrysostom counted her a woman of such devotion as to deserve the title “apostle.” He was not attributing to her sacerdotal authority, however, but praising the immense piety of a Christian woman.
- 57 “It is a tragic accident of history that this advance occurred in a social setting and under circumstances which strengthened and affirmed patriarchy, “ writers Greta Lerner. “Here is the historic moment of the death of the Mother-Goddess and her replacement by God-the-Father and the metaphorical Mother under patriarchy” (The Creation of Patriarchy. Oxford, 1986, p. 198). I mention this because there are not a few Orthodox feminists who mock St Epiphanius when he affiliated female aspirations to the priesthood with the ancient cult of goddesses. Also, among these women is a profound resentment of men. To their marrow, they hate patriarchy. They are dedicated to “the struggle against patriarchal values.” They want to join civil society in the “mutual liberation from the shackles of patriarchy that has ruled the world and our religious life for far too long. We need to help free our gospel teaching from the cultural influences that have shrouded its true message: one gospel that frees us all, men and women, and makes us precious and equal in the sight of God.” They have been “frustrated in Orthodoxy by this emphasis on obedience and submission” (presumably to men). Part of the task is to overcome apathy and obedient submission to teachings that alienate and subordinate us” (Marie Assad, “Defining Ourselves as Orthodox Women” pp. 156-157).

- 58 Translated by Antonio de Nicolas, The World & I: A Chronicle of our Changing Era. New York (Oct, 1986, p. 355).
59. The Bible and the Role of Women. Philadelphia, 1966, p. 4.
60. “The Ordination of women in the Orthodox Church,” p. 35.
61. Behr-Sigel, p. 36.
62. St Gregory of Nyssa was right that the divine Image does not admit a distinction between male and female. The body alone distinguishes them (De Hom. Opf., XVI PG 44 181C). But we cannot infer from this fact that Adam was androgynous, as radical feminists teach. Nor are we to adopt Plato’s dualism. Body and soul are intertwined, a mutual penetration which allows these two human dimensions to directly effect one another. Therefore, the body as well as the soul defines the sexes.
63. “My ecumenical contacts,” confesses Teny Perri-Simonian in a revealing statement, “have helped me to understand my own roots better; and they have made me more tolerant toward others points of view’ (“Orthodox Women in Ecumenical Dialogue,” Orthodox Speak Women Speak..., p. 150).
64. Catech. XVIII, 23 PG 33 1044D-1045A.