



**COMMENTARY
ON THE DRAFT PASTORAL**

September 1, 1990

Women for Faith and Family
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Women for Faith and Family

Commentary on the Draft Pastoral

Helen Hull Hitchcock and Laurie Navar Gill, eds.

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WOMEN FOR FAITH AND FAMILY

APPENDIX II

Appendix II: Bibliography from Footnotes. This section lists various sources cited in the text, including books, articles, and reports. The entries are organized alphabetically by author's name. Some entries include page numbers and specific chapter or section references. The list covers a wide range of topics related to faith, family, and social issues, reflecting the organization's focus on these areas.

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Introduction

THROUGHOUT its nearly six years of existence, Women for Faith & Family has attempted to be useful to the Church and to the bishops by providing a conduit for information from "grass-roots" Catholic women who may or may not be Church "activists," may or may not be highly articulate, but who, nevertheless, take seriously their Catholic faith and, of course, their bishops' call for their response to matters which are of great consequence and which affect them as women and as Catholics.

The commentary, analysis and recommendations presented here on the second draft of the "pastoral response to women's concerns" were prepared at the invitation of the bishops' committee for drafting the pastoral. They are the result of careful study and prayerful deliberation, and represent the efforts of staff members and associates of Women for Faith and Family.

Although some of the following essays which focus on particular aspects of the pastoral bear the names of their authors, much of what has been written here represents as faithful a distillation as possible of the views and opinions and suggestions of many hundreds of Catholic women, throughout the United States and elsewhere, who have written or telephoned Women for Faith & Family about the "women's pastoral" over the past several years.

We believe, as we have maintained from the beginning, that the faithful bishops of the Church will be greatly encouraged to know of the enormous outpouring of support for the doctrine and practice of the Church, of the great respect for her traditions, and fidelity to her Magisterium that these women convey.

In their name, then, we pledge continued prayerful support to all our faithful bishops, to the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, and to all our dedicated clergy. As we have said many times before, we realize fully that to be a true pastor, responsible in so many ways for the eternal lives of millions of people, is often difficult — sometimes requiring truly heroic effort, self-sacrifice and saintly resolve.

We earnestly hope we have been and may continue to be truly useful to them and to the whole Church. We ask their prayers for us, too — for Catholic women everywhere and in all walks of life — that whatever we do may prove to be what is "that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." To this end, then, we also ask their blessing.

WOMEN FOR FAITH & FAMILY

September 1, 1990

Chronology of Women for Faith and Family's activities on the women's pastoral 1984-1990

September 8, 1984 - Women for Faith & Family organizes to circulate AFFIRMATION FOR CATHOLIC WOMEN in response to bishops' request to hear from women in connection with their proposed pastoral on women.

October 1984 - New York Times advertisement challenging Catholic teachings appears, signed by many women religious.

January 1985 - WFF's Ann O'Donnell and Helen Hull Hitchcock appear on the Phil Donahue Show to respond to dissident nuns.

February 28, 1985 - WFF sends letter to bishops on pastoral committee noting that 4,544 women have signed AFFIRMATION.

June 1985 - WFF presents 10,000 names of Affirmation signers to Holy Father in Rome.

August 1985 - WFF presents list of 17,000 Affirmation signers to bishops and, at the committee's request, gives testimony at hearings in Chicago based on letters from women and reports on "listening sessions."

September 1987 - Papal visit to U.S. WFF attends meeting of Pope with laity in San Francisco.

October 10, 1987 - WFF presents list of about 40,000 names of Affirmation signers (U. S. & abroad) to Holy See at press conference in Rome during Synod on the Laity, along with testimony based on thousands of women's letters, prepared for bishop delegates to Synod.

January 10, 1988 - WFF sends letter to members of pastoral committee requesting delay in issuing pastoral until after Pope's expected post-synodal exhortation on the laity appears.

March 1988 - Bishops' administrative board approves first draft of pastoral.

April 1, 1988 - First draft of pastoral, called "Partners in the Mystery of Redemption" issued. WFF writes analysis for several publications.

June 5, 1988 - WFF issues joint statement on draft with women's religious groups, *Consortium Perfectae Caritatis*, and Institute on Religious Life Forum of Major Superiors. Statement sent to Vatican officials and all U. S. bishops before June meeting of NCCB.

June 10, 1988 - WFF sends copies of published articles and other information about the draft pastoral to bishops.

Summer, Fall 1988 - new round of "listening sessions" conducted. Revised pastoral scheduled for completion, December 1989. "Task forces" of women formed in some dioceses to conduct "sessions" and gather information. WFF receives more letters and AFFIRMATION signers.

December, 1988 - Holy See releases Pope John Paul II's *Mulieris Dignitatem*, dated August 15. *Christifidelis Laici* follows.

May 1989 - WFF issues joint statement on "Feminism, Language and Liturgy" with *Consortium* and Institute on Religious Life.

March 1990 - NCCB Administrative Board schedules vote on pastoral draft for November meeting.

April 3, 1990 - Bishops' committee releases second draft, "One in Christ Jesus."

May 1990 - Bishops' committee invites WFF, along with other groups, to offer recommendations for revised draft September 1.

June 1, 1990 - WFF issues statement on draft pastoral to all bishops, calls on bishops to find an acceptable alternative to approving pastoral.

June 1990 - NCCB-USCC (Bishop Matthew Clark, Dolores Leckey) schedule national meeting of women on implementation of the pastoral's recommendations for November 30-December 2, following NCCB's November meeting.

September 1, 1990 - WFF issues commentary, analysis, recommendations on pastoral draft.



Final Observations and Recommendations on "One in Christ Jesus"

Summary of Critiques

Critiques of the second draft of the pastoral letter on "women's concerns" issuing from a broad spectrum of sources [*inter alia*, Women for Faith & Family statement June 1, LCWR statement August 9, "Center of Concern" statement June 11, Archbishop Rembert Weakland's comments and his subsequent "listening sessions," Rosemary Ruether's "Open Letter"] have in common at least two major conclusions:

- 1) Internal inconsistencies make the draft essentially incoherent (e.g., on the one hand it claims that the "patriarchal" structure of the Church is defective, allowing for the "sin of sexism" which excludes women from exercising "full ministry," while on the other hand it restates constant Church teaching restricting the ordained ministry to men);
- 2) Because the pastoral draft is so deeply and inherently flawed by fundamental internal contradictions, the bishops should reject the draft and the entire project should be abandoned.

Agreement among the disparate critiques ends here, however. Those who support Church teaching and the Church's authority to teach register concern that the document will increase confusion on critical doctrinal matters. They are apprehensive that some of the pastoral's recommendations would cause further harm to Church unity, erode rather than enhance the authority of the bishops, and foster further dissent, rather than promote understanding and acceptance of essential Church teachings.

Those who oppose central Church teachings and reject her teaching authority are angered by the draft when it fails to conform to their concept of "church" [*sic*] and does not accede to their demands for change.

By now it is surely clear to everyone that these two distinct views are intrinsically incompatible; and that no amount of "dialogue," no number of revisions, however well intended and honestly undertaken, can produce a sound document which would also be acceptable to all.

Fundamental problems still unsolved

The pastoral "process" itself has succeeded in revealing that fact, if nothing else. It has also shown the areas which continue to present problems. What it has not succeeded in doing is what apparently it set out to do: to produce coherent teaching from the bishops of the United States on critical matters of Catholic doctrine which, at base, are at the heart of what ails the Church in our time—what it means to be human beings, male or female, in relationship to each other and in relation to God; and what every person's existence means or should mean for society and for the Church.

These problems are not unique to the United States, nor to "the West." These are cosmic questions, which have in one way or another plagued the consciousness of mankind for at least 150 years, but which have reached crisis proportions in our troubled century. They cannot be settled by any "pastoral statement" by any committee, however well motivated. Questions of such fundamental import for each of us, which bring an entire civilization to a crisis of faith, simply will not submit to the methods we have become accustomed to apply to "problem solving."

The past seven years' labor of the pastoral committee and others concerned with it demonstrates the impossibility of issuing a truly useful pastoral statement which would satisfy those women (or men) who do not understand or do not accept Church teaching, without both compromising Church doctrine and dogma and ignoring mainstream Catholics.

The bishops' dilemma

Bishops who must deliberate and decide the fate of the draft pastoral and its recommendations realize both the importance of their decision and the tension and fragility of the situation which surrounds this draft document. Bishops will, doubtless, be concerned not only about the fate of the pastoral, but about the perception of their actions by at least three groups:

- 1) the communications media, secular and religious;
- 2) the Pope, Vatican officials, and mainstream clergy, religious and laity;
- 3) dissenters.

(For the record, it should be noted that all three groups include both women and men.)

Because both the first and third groups (which, in fact, overlap considerably) now have enormous influence over public opinion, many bishops have become extremely reluctant to take a stand or make clear and forthright decisions on any issue which might unleash the hostility of the media and dissenters. Some may fear that negative publicity could harm the faith of the unsophisticated — the “rank and file” believers, the young — who are most vulnerable to persuasion by the errors they read or are taught. Bishops may genuinely worry that many Catholics may leave the Church which is portrayed as “rigid,” “narrow,” and “outdated.”

However, bishops may well be concerned also about the great harm of appearing to capitulate to what amounts to terrorism, and may perceive themselves to be, in effect, hostages of those whose agendas are either overtly or covertly hostile to the Church, her teachings, her authority and her tradition.

Bishops considering this pastoral letter may feel themselves to be in a “no-win” situation for these and other reasons:

- 1) If they proclaim clearly and forthrightly what they know to be the Truth embodied in the Church and her teachings, they risk being discredited, disobeyed and publicly ridiculed, as well as the possibility of losing some percentage of Catholics who will not accept the Church's teachings;
- 2) If they are perceived to accede to demands from those who hope to effect revolutionary “reformation” of the Church, they will:
 - a) discourage and demoralize the faithful,
 - b) encourage dissent,

- c) neutralize the evangelical mission of the Church.
- 3) They may also worry that Divine Law is “unenforceable,” and conclude, therefore, that they should not risk open conflict by proclaiming it candidly.

Many bishops now realize that while disunity is deeply damaging to the Church's ability to bring salvation to the world (as Cardinal Bernardin's address to the bishops in Santa Clara in June stressed), no less harmful are “cover-ups” and denial (as several recent scandals involving clergy have so dramatically revealed.)

The bishops' problem as defenders of the faith and as pastors of Christ's flock, at this historic time of conflict and confusion, is how to deal effectively with the climate of dissent which continues to lead many people (including clergy) into error and sin and separation from the true life-giving nurture of the Church.

The greatest challenge the bishops face today is not how to handle public relations, not how to address misperceptions about disunity, but, in fact, how to restore unity which has been shattered; how to reestablish the integrity of the Church through all her clergy, religious and laity; and how to strengthen and invigorate the faith of all the members of the Body of Christ.

Women's Commissions — Half a loaf?

Some have suggested that the bishops approve the draft pastoral's final recommendations rather than approving it in its entirety. “Center for Concern” and LCWR, for example, advocate this alternative. An apparent “compromise” may appeal to some bishops as a face-saving solution. However, this choice could cause very grave problems for the bishops and for the entire Church.

The pastoral's recommendation to create “women's commissions” is arguably the most important — and potentially the most dangerous — single item it contains. “Women's commissions” would provide a useful strategic vehicle for feminist ideologues' placing maximum pressure on bishops for radical changes in the Church. They could be easily co-opted by feminist activists and their effect on the Church and on women could be devastating. At a minimum they would interpose yet another bureaucratic layer between the bishop and his people. Among the most serious problems could be these:

1. They could become “single-sex lobby groups,” promoting the feminist political, social and religious

agendas.

2. They would use the financial support of the entire Church to promote activities they, not the Universal Church, would determine.
3. They could provide means for dissemination of so-called "feminine" spirituality programs alien to Catholic belief, thus endangering the faith and the souls of thousands of Catholic women.
4. They could set up programs for feminist "consciousness raising" designed to "radicalize" Catholic women, as has been done in Canada since the early 1980's with the radical feminist inspired "Green Kit" study programs.
5. They could co-operate with, provide a forum for and sponsor existing groups such as "WomenChurch," the "Women's Ordination Conference," "Catholics for a Free Choice," the "National Coalition of American Nuns," and many other groups and individuals of similar ideology who falsely claim to speak for Catholic women in America. Even if "women's commissions" might also offer a forum to orthodox groups or individuals, and also distribute authentically Catholic materials, nothing could nullify the perception of official endorsement by the Church in the United States of groups, programs and ideas which directly conflict with essential Church teachings.
6. Bishops and diocesan officials, as well as the NCCB, would be under continual scrutiny by these commissions. The influence of the "women's commissions" within the dioceses would be a constant factor with which each bishop would be forced to contend in establishing policy, in religious and seminary education, in developing spirituality programs, and in nearly every aspect of the bishop's work. This could seriously hamper his pastoral mission to the people of his diocese.
7. "Women's commissions" could be used to further marginalize and alienate orthodox Catholic women and their families who already have difficulty enough making their voices heard and their needs known to the bishops — women whose talents, abilities, insights and expertise are already underutilized by the present bureaucratic structure.
8. It is a truism of elementary political science that once an agency is established within an official organizational structure it becomes virtually impossible to dismantle. If ever "women's commissions" should not prove to be beneficial to the Church (or, in fact,

harmful), bishops would be essentially powerless either to control or dissolve them.

Finally, there are already "councils of Catholic women" in many dioceses (DCCW) and at the national level (NCCW) which can readily be transformed into agencies for the implementation of destructive, as well as salutary, objectives. If bishops relinquish their supervision and guidance of these councils in an attempt to mollify or placate demands of feminist activists for "full decision-making power," the result could be devastating for the thousands of faithful Catholic women who belong to these councils and for the entire Church. In addition to causing these women grief and spiritual harm, such an eventuality would rob the Church of the many thousands of hours of prayer and service these women have willingly offered, confident that they were helping the Church to accomplish her true mission.

The problem at hand — a beginning

So what can bishops do about the pastoral letter on "women's concerns" now facing them? How can they help to provide a means for those who reject Church teachings or who are confused to return to unity with the Universal Church, while also encouraging believers to fulfill their evangelical apostolate to the world? Some suggestions are:

1. Reject the draft pastoral in its entirety. Reject all its recommendations. End fruitless "dialogue."
2. Simultaneously, issue a statement indicating all bishops' commitment to promote authentic Church teaching and practice throughout all the dioceses of the United States, and to eliminate influences which are inconsistent with orthodox teaching; for it is this liberating Truth of Christ which inheres in the Church that each person ultimately seeks — and desperately needs — whether or not this fact is acknowledged.
3. Immediately initiate programs to disseminate papal teachings, clearly, honestly and unashamedly, in parishes and in schools — particularly those teachings directly focused on the critical ontological problems of our time, e.g. *Humanae Vitae*, *Familiaris Consortio*, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, *Christifidelis Laici*, *Laborem Exercens*, and the trilogy of Pope John Paul II developing the "theology of the body," *The Original Unity of Man and Woman*, etc.

4. Encourage initiatives which genuinely support families, the “domestic Church, following the Holy See’s Charter of the Rights of the Family.
5. Insist that everyone who works to develop such educational programs and foster such initiatives truly understand and believe in what the bishops are asking them to do, and can approach their tasks with genuine evangelical zeal.
6. Insist that the language and liturgy of the Church, both in theory and in practice, conform to the norms of the Universal Church, directly intervening, when necessary, to inhibit and suppress liturgical practices and forms of spirituality which are alien to the Church’s authentic tradition and which may confuse and damage the faith of the people.
7. Create no additional structures (such as “women’s commissions”) which actually separate pastors from the faithful, and which often filter out information and constructive ideas to which the bishops should have access. Work, instead, to reduce and refine existing national and diocesan bureaucracies.
8. Following the missionary example of Pope John Paul II, each bishop personally could conduct assemblies of the faithful throughout each diocese — most particularly of youth — guiding them in prayer and instructing and forming them through addresses and homilies which help them to understand and accept the teachings of the Church; for only the Truth can give them true liberty. Give them the encouragement and strength of their bishop’s example of obedient fidelity to Christ and His Church, that their faith may be deepened and enriched, and that they, too, may help to bring Christ’s message of salvation to the world which hungers and thirsts for it.

Bishops need prayerful support

Today’s bishops, as was true of many brave and saintly bishops of the past, face problems of cosmic proportions and are confronted by impediments to their apostolic work which would be unsurmountable were it not for the assurance of Divine Assistance. They may often feel isolated, alone, discouraged. They may be beset by fear, afflicted by severe temptations, fall prey to doubt, confusion, pride, disease and all manner of sin, just as might any other Christian.

It is surely true, however, that by their very role as leaders of the Church, bishops may be called to experience these afflictions more intensely than others. In our time the martyrdom which bishops and clergy must be willing to embrace for Christ’s sake, following His example of self-giving love, may take the insidious form of ridicule, detraction, and other subtle psychological warfare.

For this reason it is urgent that bishops whose office requires that they valiantly and even heroically embrace and proclaim Christ’s truth inherent in the Church, receive the constant assistance of the prayers and the work of all Catholic believers. Bishops whose faith is strong must help brother bishops who are weaker. Clergy, religious and laity must support the bishops and must support one another through constant prayer and willing service.

All Catholics who accept Christ’s commission to bring the Gospel “to every creature” and who recall God’s promise to provide whatever we lack to accomplish His work must realize that the future of the Church and the eternal lives of all humanity rely heavily on what we do now. The people of the world are crying out for the Bread of Life. We must not give them stones.

WOMEN FOR FAITH & FAMILY
September 1, 1990

Response of WOMEN FOR FAITH & FAMILY to "One in Christ Jesus"

June 1, 1990

To the Bishops of the Church in the United States:

We wish to express our concern about the revised draft of the proposed pastoral letter, "One in Christ Jesus," scheduled for consideration by the bishops at their November meeting. Although we are preparing a more thorough critique of the draft at the invitation of the bishops' committee on the pastoral, we include here some of the reasons why we believe it is critically important that the draft be given most careful scrutiny.

1. The pastoral does not actually respond comprehensively to "women's concerns," nor did the "listening sessions" on which the pastoral was based accurately reflect the experience of most Catholic women. The "consciousness raising" format of the meetings tended to attract discontented women, and the kinds of questions posed tended to elicit predictable critical responses. The data from these sessions was given too much weight in formulating the pastoral's response and recommendations.

This draft contains an ominous blueprint for increasing Church bureaucracy and setting in motion machinery (through establishing "women's commissions") effectively to exclude both the testimony and the work for the Church of orthodox women, who already have difficulty enough making effective witness of their faith.

2. There is a fundamental conflict between feminist/liberationist ideology and the teachings and tradition of the Church. This essential conflict, which is at the root of much of the confusion and dissent in the Church today, is recognized both by orthodox Catholics and those who reject essential Church teachings; however, it is substantially ignored by the pastoral draft.

It fails to address this conflict in a way consistent with the fundamental nature of the Church. Therefore, it also fails to offer useful and consistent suggestions

for the inevitable encounter of individuals with ideologies alien to Christianity and to the resolution of problems, conflict and confusion within the Church and in society.

Many of the pastoral's twenty-five recommendations at the end do not follow consistently from Church teachings. In some instances, the recommendations contradict the text itself.

3. Many central concerns of Catholic women are omitted or inadequately addressed by the pastoral. There are many real plagues afflicting women and their families in our modern world: divorce, artificial contraception, fornication, sterilization, abortion, abortifacient pills & IUDs, infanticide, pornography, homosexual perversions, AIDS and other venereal diseases, sex education propaganda, euthanasia, artificial reproduction, child and spouse abuse, to name a few; and for Catholic mothers responsible for the religious and moral formation of future generations, defective or even destructive religious education.
4. Many Catholic women religious encounter problems living their faith within their religious communities. The section on religious life ignores the serious conflicts within religious orders over essential matters of faith, and provides no useful support for orthodox women religious who too frequently are intimidated into silence by dissenting leadership.
5. There is a deep desire among women for spiritual development — a desire which, when vital and authentic Catholic doctrine is missing, can lead to distorted quasi-pagan forms of religious expression (very briefly alluded to in the pastoral). This is a growing problem, especially within some religious communities of women; yet the pastoral offers no program for replacing these increasingly esoteric, alien and spiritually destructive forms of worship with genuine devotions which enrich and enliven true faith.

6. While the new draft contains expanded sections on two critical issues which have been the subject of considerable controversy due to feminist critiques (ordination and contraception), the draft is inconsistent in its treatment of these questions. Although official Church documents and papal statements are cited, the draft's use of these materials is inadequate; furthermore, too many works critical of Church teachings are presented as if they are to be regarded as equally valid or important with Church teaching in elucidating these issues.
7. Implementation of several of the pastoral's recommendations not only cannot help, but may actually hurt the Church's mission. For example, would implementation of the recommendations insisting on a "sexist test" for seminarians, mandating "inclusive" language in the liturgy, establishing "women's commissions" in every diocese, or authorizing support for federal programs such as day-care, "equal pay" and similar "family" legislation actually promote authentic unity within the Church? In fact, no consensus in support of these issues and policies exists, either within the Church or in society, and certainly not among Catholic women.
8. We understand the purpose of a pastoral letter to be essentially catechetical in nature; and that the intention of the bishops in writing such letters is for instruction and formation of the faithful. Therefore, it would seem essential that to achieve this, any pastoral letter should present definitively the teachings of the Church in such a way as to be truly formative, positive and unifying. This pastoral effort may have been fundamentally flawed from the beginning, in that it is not actually the bishops' exercising their teaching function, but their "response" to a limited set of "women's concerns." Furthermore, its entire spirit and disposition, its agenda, process and content were determined and governed to a large extent by the feminist critical perspective. To the extent that the draft failed to accede fully to feminist demands, feminists within the Church are angered by the result. To the extent that the draft erodes Church doctrine and authority by its concessions to these demands and by its conciliatory tone towards those who do not accept Church teachings (nor her authority to teach), it compromises its character as a pastoral letter.

We are convinced that, if approved by the bishops, the pastoral will not help to resolve conflicts and restore harmony in the Church, among Catholic women

and men, in women's religious orders; nor will it increase authentic vocations to the religious life or priesthood. Neither can it help to settle disputes about legitimate roles for laity and women in the work of the Church. This letter will not help to dispel confusion about the Church, her teachings or her mission. It will not help Catholics to understand and accept the teachings of the Church. It will not help women to deepen their spiritual lives nor to increase personal holiness.

In fact, it seems inevitable that if its recommendations were adopted it would actually be divisive, not unifying; would increase polarization among Catholics; would encourage dissent and increase the temptation of some confused Catholics to ignore the authentic message of the Church when it conflicts with their own notions; and would, in the perception of many Catholics, diminish, rather than enhance, the magisterial authority of the bishops themselves.

9. We earnestly hope that the bishops will find an acceptable alternative to either approving the pastoral draft or prolonging the "dialogue process."
10. We also hope that the bishops will find means to disseminate throughout the United States the teachings contained in such papal documents as *Familiaris Consortio*, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, and *Christifidelis Laici*, the "Charter of the Rights of the Family" and other such teachings which do respond directly to the principal concerns and needs of most women and their families. It seems clear to us that these documents, two of which were issued soon after the first draft of this pastoral letter appeared, were intended especially to address central issues affecting the role of women raised by feminism which have gained currency in the West, as well as providing the groundwork for vigorous and authentic evangelical action by the laity consistent with the salvific mission of the Church.

Surely the Holy Father's intent was that these teachings be used by the entire Church. We would like to see study guides, workshops, symposia, audio and video tapes produced and promoted by the Church which would make the extremely important teaching these documents contain available to everyone.

Finally, we pledge to the bishops our prayers, our support and assistance in any way available to us which might be useful to them in their often difficult task of nurturing the true faith which subsists in the Church and of carrying Christ's liberating message of redemption to the entire world.

A Critique of "One in Christ Jesus"

by Helen Hull Hitchcock

(originally written for the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter)

After three more years, the second draft of the pastoral letter on "women's concerns" still "responds" almost exclusively to the same feminist "concerns" of sexism. Significantly, the new draft, now entitled "One in Christ Jesus," opens with a biblical quotation from Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus") which is about the only verse of scripture feminist theologians and biblical scholars accept without qualification as inerrant, and which they frequently cite to support their demand for "equal access" to all ecclesial roles — including ordination to the priesthood.

This draft, although mercifully shorter than the first, is still essentially flawed. It still focuses on the "voices of alienation" in nearly all its references to the "listening sessions," still argues from the assumption that the Church is a patriarchal "structure" desperately in need of "conversion" and change to reflect feminist views.¹ It is still essentially negative in its view of the Church, "improved" only to the extent that it expands sections dealing with ordination and contraception, and makes some limited use of recent Papal teaching in *Mulieris Dignitatem* and *Christifidelis Laici*, which it could hardly ignore entirely.

The new draft still displays only selective sensitivity to the concerns of women, and for the most part stereotypes and excludes from consideration the majority of women who are not feminist activists. In its overwhelming preoccupation with "sexism," it unfairly demeans and stereotypes men (that is, male human beings) as oppressors of women. The existence of distorted or sinful attitudes of women towards men, or of women towards other women is omitted entirely from consideration.

The new draft apologizes repeatedly to feminists for

the "sin of sexism," stating as a given, for example, that "in the past, church [sic] and society have erred in considering women almost exclusively in relation to men and in regarding only men as fundamentally autonomous" (part I, 21), yet nowhere are women's defective attitudes discussed. Surely this is a remarkable omission in an effort such as this to call the Church to "conversion" to rectify errors in understanding the equal dignity of all human beings.

Women are always sexism's victims, never its perpetrators, according to the pastoral. The evil of sexism, as described in the pastoral, "fosters sins of rape, prostitution, adultery, emotional and physical abandonment, and pornography." However, abortion, which always involves a woman, the mother, is never directly called a sin. Neither are contraception and remarriage after divorce. Although these errors might be related in some way to "sexism," the pastoral urges compassion and understanding for those "persons of good will" who cannot accept church teaching on these moral issues. "Pastoral solicitude and concern" is expressed for lesbians whose "dignity as persons has been belittled and demeaned by sexism abetted by cultural prejudices." (Part II, para 87) To be a male guilty of "sexism," however, apparently entails full penalties.

Euthanasia, which arguably affects more women than men, both as care-givers and potential victims, is not mentioned. Neither is the possibility that women may have unjust and sinful attitudes towards men and towards other women, nor that women (not just men or "social structures") may have a defective view of what it means to be a Christian and a Catholic which need "conversion."

By the pastoral's own definition of sexism, we would submit that the implied exclusion of women from full responsibility for their own sins against God, against

human life and the integrity of persons is itself sexist. To subsume all sin under the heading of sexism, or to reduce the culpability of women because of men's shortcomings surely diminishes the "full personhood" of women.

The pastoral does not respond effectively to the most important concerns of women in the real world who are facing an uphill battle for the faith of their families in a society which is increasingly resistant to Christian moral teaching and overtly hostile to the practice of the Catholic faith. Instead, it lists twenty-five recommended initiatives "to foster equality as persons."

Some of these recommendations are unexceptionable and, indeed, unnecessary, especially in the light of recent papal teaching.² Many, however, are certain to cause further problems and divisions.

Item 1 on the list of initiatives is "oppose the destructive power of sexism by working to change structures, attitudes and misconceptions that perpetuate this evil." It is important to note that 'church' [sic] has elsewhere and repeatedly been identified as an afflicted "structure" in need of "redemption." For example, "The corrosive power of the sin of sexism has seeped into the fabric of our civilization, invading economic and governmental systems as well as social and *ecclesiastical structures*." (Part I, para 34; emphasis added.) Accepting this premise, it makes no sense whatever that women should not be given access to the "power" of the ordained priesthood. We are, in fact, told that "many women" find in the Church's teaching on ordination such serious evidence of sexism that they may leave the Church. Yet this draft of the pastoral recites Vatican and papal statements that confining the ordained priesthood to men "represents the mind of Christ." Therefore, we must surely conclude either that "the mind of Christ" unfairly excludes women; or that Christ's "mind" is not reflected by the "current teaching" of the Catholic Church.

It should be noted, too, that in the extensive section called "Problems of Exclusion," the pastoral asks for "study" of opening the diaconate to women and "encourage[s] participation by women in all liturgical ministries that do not require ordination," including service at the altar and preaching (Part III paras.113-124.)

Equally troublesome is the recommendation (Item 12) to, "Require that the church's [sic] teachings on the equality of the human person become integral to seminary and lay formation." The text devotes an entire subsection to this topic, indicating that freedom from "sexism" is supremely important in the "formation of

candidates for the diaconate and priesthood." (Part III, paras. 122-124) What the pastoral does not say is who determines whether a candidate is "sexist," and how. Despite the "vocations crisis" widely deplored by those who advocate the ordination of women to provide more priests, the draft gives still another means of filtering out men who might become priests. If this pastoral is taken seriously, seminarians can be forced to take a "loyalty oath," not for the Church and Church teachings, but against "sexism."

Still other recommendations are objectionable because they proceed directly from feminist critiques of the Church. For example, Item 17, "*Adopt inclusive [sic] language when and where it is appropriate.*"³ To accept uncritically the argument of feminists who believe the very language is a product of the "patriarchy" and intrinsically "sexist," to propose a such a controversial and highly ideological change in *lex orandi*, moreover, to refrain from commenting on the radical way in which this is intended to alter *lex credendi*, is a very serious error. Important recent scholarship on the subject of proposed changes in liturgical language, as well as the experience of most women who use the language is ignored.

Item 18 requires establishment of diocesan women's commissions — the creation of yet another bureaucracy which will impose still another layer between bishops and ordinary folk.

Part III, and especially the sections entitled "New Solidarity of Women" and "Christian Feminism" may hold the key to what is really amiss with this, as well as the first draft. The following passages are illustrative:

127. Partly as a result of Vatican II and partly *through the influence of the women's movement*, women religious and laywomen are discovering a new solidarity. ... *The women's movement supports sisterly mutuality as distinct from relationships based on rank.*

128. ... Women are finding new expressions of sisterhood. ... In some cases the initiative comes from laywomen... whose *longing for deeper spirituality and a stronger theological formation continues to challenge the rest of the church.*[sic]

129. Within this move toward mutuality among women in the church [sic] an awareness is growing of the need to promote and celebrate women's religious experience *through emphasis on "feminine" or "feminist" spirituality...* [such as] *risking change rather than settling for the rigidity of worn-out institutional structures; offering prophetic witness in the face of social injustice [and] seeking ways to modify traditional modes of religious living...*

130. In reports from the hearings, several women identified themselves as "Christian feminists," faithful to church

[sic] teaching yet championing the rights of *women menaced by sinful stances and structures*. ...

131. This pastoral letter supports the efforts of feminists in general to liberate women from attitudes and actions that stand in the way of women using their gifts and talents for the good of society and the church [sic]. *We want to respond to the challenge that feminist thinkers, writers, teachers and speakers pose by persisting in our intent to eradicate the personal and structural forms of sexism documented in this pastoral.* [emphases added.]

These passages encapsulate what is fundamentally wrong with the pastoral, and why it should not be adopted by the bishops. They reveal the bias which fundamentally flaws the pastoral; and they contain dangerous blueprints for forcing all women into the ideological rigidities of the "women's movement" if they hope to have any voice whatsoever in the work of the Church.

Unsurprisingly, this pastoral contains no attempt to critique feminism itself — a movement which has had tremendously destructive effects on individuals who subscribe to its theories as well as on society (abortion, sexual "liberation," among others) — a divisive movement which has set woman against woman, women against men. In fact, the work is pervaded with feminist constructs, feminist views and feminist social and religious critiques.

Unlike the Holy Father's recent Apostolic Exhortations on the subjects covered by the draft pastoral which addressed issues the pastoral attempts to deal with, and which, in the minds of many, obviated the need for this pastoral, the new draft contains little to allay confusion about basic teachings of the Catholic faith. It is deeply flawed by internal contradictions. Rather than clarification, we get compounded confusion.⁴ In fact, the pastoral provides a means to step up pressure on priests and bishops to make changes in liturgy to conform to feminist demands (e.g. "altar girls," "inclusive" language, etc.), and to commit the Church to an essentially biased view of womanhood and "women's concerns" which does not reflect reality.

Acceptance and implementation of the pastoral will make it even more difficult for women who are not feminist activists to work within the Church, to hold offices in parishes and on diocesan committees, or to teach the Catholic faith in schools.

Already often marginalized, alienated, intimidated and ignored, unfairly stereotyped as ignorant and labeled "right wing" or "fundamentalist" by feminist women who happen to hold most positions of leadership in

religious communities and in Church offices, these faithful women's talents, abilities, insights and experience (and in many cases remarkable personal holiness) are a resource which the Church sorely needs.

These women of the Church need encouragement and support for their faithful service to the Church; they need assistance in their difficult task of teaching the Catholic faith in their homes and in schools; they need the help of men — priests and bishops and spiritual directors and husbands — to accept their full and equal responsibility as Christians to deepen their Catholic faith and to put this faith into authentic action for the benefit of both the Church and society. They do not need "conversion" to feminist views.

An unintentional question which the pastoral draft raises is why so many people who occupy positions of leadership and "decision making power" in the Church so consistently dissent from essential teachings of the Catholic faith. A second question is what can be done about it. Until this problem is forthrightly addressed at all levels we can expect the cleavage to widen between what the Church constantly teaches (which the Pope consistently explains and upholds) and those individuals within the Church who publicly reject essential elements of the Catholic faith, causing ever greater damage to the mission of the Church to bring salvation to the entire world.

Meanwhile, consideration surely must be given to those millions of Catholic women and men who try to remain faithful to the liberating truth of the Catholic faith, and, moreover, who try to pass this faith intact to their children, the real future of the Church and of society. Pastoral letters like this one do not help. Their concerns have evidently fallen on deaf ears. We trust that the American bishops who must decide the fate of this draft pastoral letter will hear them.

1 Of the 64 works cited in the footnotes which are not Vatican or USCC/NCCB documents, 20 are secular (including feminist works and 'neutral' statistical studies), at least 24 are writings of known feminists and/or dissenters (*inter alia*, Rosemary Ruether, Anne Carr, Raymond Brown). Only 8 works are cited specifically in support of Church doctrine and/or discipline; of these, three writers are Protestant, one Greek Orthodox.

2 For example, Item 3, "Reaffirm the values of commitment and fidelity in married life," and Item 11, "Help young women and men to develop healthy and respectful faith-inspired attitudes toward one another."

3 (cf Part III, paras 133-135 on "Inclusive Language.")

4 For example, citing *Familiaris Consortio*, the pastoral seems to advocate the concept of a family wage, making it possible for mothers to remain with their young children in the home (para. 60). Yet it

specifically advocates social policies regarded by most experts as in direct conflict with the concept of a "family wage." Many, in fact, view such programs as undermining the "traditional" family in important ways, even those who regard them as useful or even necessary under current economic conditions. No genuine consensus exists even in the secular community about the absolute merit of such programs, much less within the Church. These are, however, important goals of feminists.

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Citation of Vatican Documents in “One in Christ Jesus”

by Susan Benofy, Ph.D.

At first glance one expected an improvement in the second draft of the American bishops pastoral on women because of the greater use of references to encyclicals, apostolic exhortations, council documents, papal addresses, etc. (We will refer to these collectively as Vatican documents.) It was especially promising that there were 22 citations of *Mulieris Dignitatem* and 9 of *Christifidelis Laici*, both of which have been issued since the first draft was written. The teachings and insights of these documents, however, do not seem to be incorporated to any significant extent in the new draft—odd in view of the fairly large number of references to them.

A closer scrutiny of the actual use made of various Vatican documents in the text of the pastoral reveals numerous instances in which short phrases were taken from a document, but no substantial use made of the document itself. This is apparent, for example, in sections 47 and 95, which between them account for five citations of Vatican documents. More serious are incomplete or out of context citations or paraphrases which change the emphasis or application of a statement.

For example, in section 2 we find: “It holds that women and men have ‘the same nature...the basic equality of all must receive increasingly greater recognition.’ ” *Gaudium et Spes*, 29 is cited as the source of the passage put in single quotes here. The excerpted passage gives the impression that *Gaudium et Spes* is here concerned primarily with the equality of women to men. In fact, the full passage begins: “Since all men possess a rational soul...since they have the same nature and origin...” The passage is concerned with the equality of all human beings (of which the equality of men and women is a corollary). The replacing of the initial phrase changes the emphasis.

Section 42 contains a footnote (24) which quotes from *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 14: “The concrete and histori-

cal situation of women... is weighed down by the inheritance of sin.... this inheritance is expressed in habitual discrimination against women in favour of men.” The full passage is: “Jesus enters into the concrete and historical situation of women, a situation which is weighed down by the inheritance of sin. One of the ways in which this inheritance is expressed is habitual discrimination against women in favour of men. This inheritance is rooted within women too.” The full passage specifies discrimination against women as only one manifestation of the inheritance of sin and points out that women also have this inheritance.

A more serious problem with an incomplete quotation occurs in section 50. There we read: “The love of husband and wife...‘becomes a real symbol of that new and eternal covenant sanctioned in the blood of Christ.’ ” The passage in single quotes is from *Familiaris Consortio*, 13. The full clause from *Familiaris Consortio* is: “the marriage of baptized persons thus becomes a real symbol of that new and eternal covenant sanctioned in the blood of Christ.” The love between the spouses, rather than the marriage bond itself is said to be a symbol of the new covenant in the pastoral. This then leads to a statement in section 51: “*Provided...love prevails, marriage...is a great blessing.*” (Emphasis added.) The two passages taken together could seem to imply that when “love” no longer “prevails” the marriage is no longer a symbol of the covenant, which would certainly weaken the idea of indissolubility of marriage. In contrast *Familiaris Consortio*, 13 goes on to say: “By virtue of the sacramentality of their marriage, spouses are bound to one another in the most profoundly indissoluble manner.”

Section 50 speaks of spouses in a happy marriage and then says: “In the words of Pope John Paul II, they are meant to enjoy ‘a more lively awareness of personal

freedom and greater attention to the quality of interpersonal relationships.’” *Familiaris Consortio*, 13 is cited as the source of the passage in single quotes. In its original context this passage is a statement of one of the positive aspects of the situation of families in the world today: “On the one hand, in fact, there is a more lively awareness of personal freedom...” That is, the original source asserts that this “more lively awareness...” is present in the world at large, and the pastoral uses it as an illustration of what ought to occur, and then only in a “happy marriage.” This is an odd use of that quotation.

The passage in section 96 of the pastoral to which footnote 65 is attached concerns Baptism, and says Baptism makes us “members of the body of Christ and, therefore, his image and presence on earth.” This is applied to both men and women. This may be a problem if it is saying both men and women are images of Christ. Section 7 of *Mulieris Dignitatem*, cited in 65, however, is concerned with the Genesis account of man being created in the “image and likeness of God,” and does not mention Baptism. The connection between the pastoral text and the text cited in the footnote is obscure.

Section 97 of the pastoral contains no direct quotations from Vatican documents, but cites *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 24 in a footnote. Apparently this paragraph of the pastoral is intended as a paraphrase of part of *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 24. Passages in both documents point out the long time needed to realize the ideal of “no more slave or freeman” in the actual abolition of slavery. However, the pastoral talks as if this problem has been completely solved, while in the cited section the Holy Father goes on to say: “And what is one to say of the many forms of slavery ... which have not yet disappeared from history?”

A more serious problem in this paragraph, however, is its treatment of the parallel argument concerning the equality of men and women. It speaks of “new insights into ... equality” and says: “Today we are beginning to see that...relationships must be transformed...” This phrasing gives the impression that insights of the last few years are meant. However, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 24 speaks of the “‘innovation’ of Christ” as expressed in the New Testament. It is Christ’s “new” view of marriage which the Holy Father says “...must gradually establish itself in hearts, consciences, behavior and customs. This is a call which from that time onward does not cease to challenge succeeding generations; it is a call which people have to accept ever anew.”

Section 117 of the pastoral quotes both *Inter Insignores* and the Commentary on it concerning the diffi-

culty of accepting today certain of the arguments against the ordination of women advanced in past ages. The full sentence from the Commentary is: “It is because of this transitory cultural element that some arguments adduced on this subject in the past are scarcely defensible today.” The first part of this quote should not be ignored, especially since the pastoral authors wish to support their position with arguments from the contemporary “women’s movement”—a transitory cultural phenomenon. Furthermore, the Commentary goes on to say: “Above all, it would be a serious mistake to think that such considerations provide the only or the most decisive reasons against the ordination of women in the thought of the Fathers, of the medieval writers and of the theologians of the classical period.” To quote the two negative passages about past theological arguments without this clarification is to give too negative a view of theological arguments concerning the ordination of women.

In section 124 the quote from *Christifideles Laici*,⁵² (footnote 110) is correct in saying that the Holy Father urges “the coordinated presence of both men and women”. However, the Pastoral goes on to say that progress toward this goal will be achieved when “men strive to change the structures” that oppress women, and then gives feminism and “solidarity among women” as “signs of hope.” The prescription for achieving this goal in *Christifideles Laici*,⁵² is quite different. There it says: “...the most ... fundamental way to assure this coordinated and harmonious presence of men and women in the life and mission of the Church, is the fulfillment of the tasks and responsibilities of the couple and the Christian family in which the variety of diverse forms of life and love is seen and communicated ...” It is hard to believe that the pastoral and the encyclical can really be talking about the same goal when their proposed ways to achieve it show so little resemblance.

Section 139 says that when they “...are fully respected as equals ... women will ‘uncover, cherish and ennoble all that is true, good, and beautiful in the human community.’” *Gaudium et Spes*, 76 is cited as the source of the section in single quotes. The original reads: “Holding faithfully to the gospel and exercising her mission in the world, the Church consolidates peace among men, to God’s glory. For it is her task to uncover, cherish, and ennoble all that is true, good, and beautiful in the human community.” This passage occurs at the end of a section on the role of the Church in the political realm.

Why is something the Church *is doing* turned into

something that women *will do*, and that only when they "are fully respected as equals" and "their talents...are fully utilized"?

In section 152, footnote 129 from *Christifidelis Laici*, 49 is a correct quotation, but the interpretation provided in the pastoral is disturbing. Immediately after the quote from *Christifideles Laici* it says: "This means in effect that Christians must reject...all practices that make women feel as if they are not accepted." As some women feel as if they are not accepted as long as they cannot be ordained, this seems to contradict the (half-hearted) defense of an all-male priesthood in another section of the pastoral.

The quote (footnote 135) from *Christifideles Laici* in section 157 on the special contribution that women have to make is only one part of a two-fold mission as stated by the Holy Father:

"In particular, two great tasks entrusted to women merit the attention of everyone. First of all, the task of bringing full dignity to the conjugal life and to

motherhood...Secondly, women have the task of assuring the moral dimension of culture, the dimension—namely of a culture worthy of the person--of an individual yet social life."

Quoting only the second of these tasks, as is done in the pastoral, gives a false emphasis which is reinforced by following the quote immediately with section 158 which is a list of primarily political causes and activities that it is claimed women have been involved in. No mention is made here of marriage or the family.

It is disturbing that so many passages from Vatican documents are taken out of context and then misinterpreted or simply left incomplete in a way that tends to leave the reader with a false impression. A much more careful consideration of Vatican documents, especially of *Mulieris Dignitatem*, is clearly needed.

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Select Bibliography on Woman and Man

compiled by Germaine Fry Murray

The works listed below contain valuable psychological, anthropological, theological, and philosophical insight into the nature, ethos and vocation of woman and man. Each work contradicts feminist tenets; instead each contributes an authentic articulation of the role of woman in modern society and in the Church.

The list is hardly comprehensive, but suggests important works which should have been consulted by the pastoral committee. Only one of these works, *Women in the Priesthood?* by Fr. Manfred Hauke, was among the bibliographical references in the text of the draft.

Only eight of the pastoral's sixty-four citations (excluding papal documents) supported Church teachings. [See appendix II.] Of these eight, only four were references to works of Catholic authors. One Orthodox and three Protestant authors were referenced in support of Catholic teaching (three on ordination to the priesthood, one on "inclusive" language). There is no indication that the pastoral committee utilized the work of important orthodox Catholic theologians such as Dr. Joyce Little of the University of St. Thomas in Houston or Donald Keefe, SJ of Marquette University.

Of the remaining fifty-six works, twenty were from secular sources (including feminist works and neutral statistical reports), and at least twenty-four were from authors known to be Catholic feminists and/or dissenters.

Notable omissions from the following list are Pope John Paul II's recent Apostolic letters, his trilogy developing the "theology of the body," several important classic writings on theology and spirituality by or about women, and secular and non-Catholic works of anthropology, psychology and theology relevant to the draft pastoral.

Encyclicals and Papal writings

Leo XIII. *Aracatum: On Christian Marriage*, in *The Papal Encyclicals*, ed. Claudia Carlen, 5 vols., McGrath Publishing Co., 1981, 2, pp. 29-40.

Pius X. *Ad Diem illum Laetissimum: On the Immaculate Conception*, in *The Papal Encyclicals*, ed. Claudia Carlen, 5 vols, McGrath Publishing Co., 1981, 3, pp. 11-18.

Pius XI. *Casti Connubi: On Christian Marriage*, 3, pp. 391-414.

Pius XII. *Sacra Virginitas: On Sacred Virginity*, 4, pp. 237-248. *Ad Caeli Regenam: Proclaiming the Queenship of Mary*, 4, pp. 223-236.

John Paul II. **Original Unity of Man and Woman**, Daughters of St. Paul, Boston, 1986.

John Paul II. **Love and Responsibility**, tr. H.T. Willets, 1981.

A compendium of his work on the phenomenology of the sexual urge and conjugal love. This work is primary because of its profound discussion concerning the insidious nature of artificial birth control and the resulting reification of the female in relationships where artificial contraception is practised.

Books

Arnold, Francis Xavier. **Man and Woman: Their Nature and Mission**. New York, 1963.

A seminal work on Christian anthropology and phenomenology. Father Arnold takes for his foundation Pius XI's encyclical, Casti Connubi, which emphasizes that both the laywoman and the layman are fully included in the universal priesthood of the New Covenant.

Bouyer, Louis. **Woman in the Church.** tr. Marilyn Teichert, San Francisco, 1979.

Father Bouyer celebrates the respective ethos of both the male and the female with regard to their respective missions and ministries. He concretely describes the characteristics of the male mission as compared to the female mission in the economy of salvation.

The Church and Women: A Compendium. ed.

Helmut Moll. Ignatius, San Francisco, 1988
A collection of scholarly articles on feminism by European theologians, including Cardinals Joseph Ratzinger and Hans Urs von Balthasar, Barbara Albrecht, Jutta Burggraf and Fr. Manfred Hauke.

Danielou, Jean. **The Ministry of Women in the Early Church.** London, 1961.

Feuillet, Andre. **Jesus and His Mother: The Role of the Virgin Mary in Salvation History and the Place of Woman in the Church.** tr. Leonard Maluf, St. River, Mass: St. Bede's Publications, 1984.

The book's third section refutes the egalitarian argument for a female priesthood and diaconate. According to Feuillet "what we are dealing with is rather symbolism tied in with the history of salvation." This symbolism is "...rooted in what man and woman are in themselves by the very intention of the Creator. Women who reproach the Church with barring them access to the priesthood might just as legitimately reproach the Creator for having made them women." (217).

Guitton, Jean. **Feminine Fulfillment.** Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1965.

Short essays on the spiritual natures and gifts of women and men. Especially incisive are Guitton's remarks about the modern woman and her special mission.

Guitton, Jean. **Human Love.** Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1966.

Guitton's discussion of how women are at the very center of Christ's revolutionizing of the "languages of love."

Hauke, Manfred. **Women in the Priesthood?** San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989

A comprehensive theological analysis of ordination which takes into account feminist arguments and emphasizes the biblical foundations of Catholic teaching.

Jeanniere, Abel. **The Anthropology of Sex.** New York, 1967.

An anthropological study of sexuality which indicts the Marxist objectification of sexual differentiation. Jeanniere believes spiritual freedom and creativity are "numbed and mutilated" in the Marxist (and De Beauvoirian, hence feminist) perspective because it denies that "To be fully oneself is to know that one is for the other."

Le Fort, Gertrude von. **The Eternal Woman: The Woman in Time: Timeless Woman,** tr. Placid Jordan, Milwaukee, 1968.

First published in 1934, this book continues to be a classic discussion of the significance of woman "under her symbolic aspect." LeFort believes that woman has a special affiliation with the religious sphere.

de Lubac, S.J., Henri. **The Motherhood of the Church.** San Francisco, 1982.

Martimort, Aimé George. **Deaconesses.** San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986.

The definitive historical study of the subject. The French theologian's exhaustive research reveals the ambiguity with which the ancient institution of deaconesses was encumbered, and suggests that if the "archeological" restoration of the institution were attempted today it could "obscure the fact that the call to serve the Church is urgently addressed today to all women, especially in the area of the transmission of Faith and works of charity."

Mosshamer, Ottolie. **The Priest and Womanhood.** tr. Robert J. Voigt, 1964.

Originally published in Germany in 1959, Mosshamer's primary concern is the necessary role of the priest in the formation of the Catholic woman and how modern secularist influences accentuate the necessity for this formation.

Natural Family Planning: Nature's Way, God's Way. Forward by Terence Cardinal Cook, Milwaukee, 1980.

An excellent international collection of articles on the Church's teaching concerning artificial birth control and Natural Family Planning. The second section of the book is devoted to scientific research on the physiology of reproduction and NFP; the last part traces the Church's Magisterial teaching on natural birth regulation. The

appendix contains Ecclesiastical documents which discuss the Magisterium's teaching on human sexuality.

Ong S.J., Walter. **Fighting for Life: Context, Sexuality, and Consciousness**, 1981.

A scholarly and yet contemplative discussion of human sexuality in all its spiritual and psychological implications. Its uniqueness lies in its description and explanation of male anthropology. Father Ong draws extensively from the work of sociobiologists to emphasize the continuum between the biological and the spiritual.

Quay, S.J., Paul. **Human Sexuality**, San Francisco, 1988.

A concise and readable work on the Church's moral teachings on the nature and meaning of human sexuality. Father Quay's book would be valuable in developing educational programs for youth.

Ratzinger, Joseph, Cardinal. **The Ratzinger Report**. San Francisco: Ignatius. 1986

A candid and enlightening discussion of contemporary problems in the Church, including "liberation theology," the role of women in the Church, and other topics of current concern by the head of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Speyr, Adrienne von. **Handmaid of the Lord**, San Francisco, 1984.

Speyr, Adrienne von. **Three Women and the Lord**, tr. Graham Gregory, Ignatius Press, 1986.

Two spiritual works concerning women by a well-known twentieth-century mystic.

Stein, Edith. **Essays on Woman**. Washington D.C., 1987.

Stein's work on the proper formation of woman serves as a complement to John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, Mulieris Dignitatem. Both works proceed from the same philosophical tradition and both use a similar phenomenological approach.

Von Hildebrand, Dietrich. **Man and Woman**. Chicago, 1966.

The late German theologian approaches sex and the sexes personalistically and phenomenologically, maintaining that our sexuality goes to the very depth of our bodily existence. He observes that the trivialization of sex in our time threatens the dignity of women. Von Hildebrand's discussion of what is now called 'complementarity' is especially insightful.

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Marriage and “Family Planning” in “One in Christ Jesus”

by Janet Smith, Ph.D.

The bishops have taken on a difficult job in addressing the situation of American women in society and the Church. They are to be commended for their hard work. But it is my judgment that the document still needs much work; otherwise I suspect it will do little good and may even come to be an historical embarrassment for the Church.

In general the document still seems too much a litany of complaints; it sounds like what women do best is complain. And for all of that, I wonder if some of the most important complaints I know Catholic women have were heard. The chief concerns of Catholic women I hear from include issues not even mentioned in the pastoral:

Are our children in Catholic schools really being formed in the faith? Are the sex education programs promoting a “Planned Parenthood” view of human sexuality or promoting the Catholic view of sexuality? Why are diocesan offices and religious education positions filled by those who are working to change Church teaching rather than to promote it? In a different vein, do the liturgies lift hearts and minds to the Lord and do they serve to form children in worthy modes of worship?

Many women are concerned that daycare is not in the interests of children and family and that current legislation will make it difficult for the woman who chooses to remain at home and dedicate herself to caring for her children. There is also concern that federal legislation will make it more difficult for churches to provide daycare. Were these views not expressed at the listening sessions or were they not recorded?

Here I am going to concentrate on the section on “Family Planning” since that is my area of expertise. Section 71, as does so many of the sections, begins with complaints — the validity of which is never questioned. Women claim that their marriages have broken up because of the Church’s condemnation of contraception. Wouldn’t it be wise here to cite the studies that show that

marriages break up because of the use of contraception? Couples using NFP rarely divorce. This should be mentioned. We are told that women leave the Church “after lives of marital pain and frustration.” What kinds of marriages do they have that cannot tolerate periodic abstention from sexual intercourse? Again, I suspect there is much wrong with these marriages that leads to their breakdown. A deeper and clearer appreciation of the Catholic view of marriage and a greater commitment to living by it may, in fact, strengthen these marriages rather than weaken them.

Those who do not accept or live by the Church’s teaching on contraception need some help in thinking through their relationship with the Church. Are they still eligible to receive communion? Is this a matter between them and their confessors?

Section 72 is excellent and should come first before we hear from those or about those who do not recognize the wisdom of the Church in this area. It might mention that Pope John Paul II has done an extensive catechesis, explaining that contraception not only violates the procreative but also the unitive meaning of marriage.

Section 74 rightly and wisely notes that there is a great misunderstanding and misrepresentation of what the Church teaches. Here the bishops could pledge to do their utmost to set straight members of the Church and others about what the Church teaches and why. Priests should be better grounded in Church teaching and all Catholic educators and other representatives of the diocese should be enthusiastic about the teaching and as adept as possible in defending it.

Section 75 doesn’t clarify the teaching in the way I think necessary. It states “People are inclined to believe that the church urges couples to have as many children as possible.” This is certainly false and the view ought to be corrected. But the next sentence that cites *Humanae Vitae* 16 is not accurate. It is hard to find in *HV* 16 what

the document says appears there. (What the document is looking for is to be found in *Gaudium et Spes* 50. But I do not think the message our times needs to hear is that it is all right to limit family size.) Rather, we are a very materialistic and hedonistic society that finds it hard to make material and spiritual sacrifices. The Church in all its many documents on marriage calls on spouses to be generous in their child-bearing (e.g., see *HV* 10). We are also told that spouses need "serious reasons" to practice NFP (e.g., see *HV* 10 and *HV* 16). Few Catholic couples have pondered what it means to be generous with God in one's childbearing and why that is a wonderful thing. Few understand what reasons are suitable for attempting to limit one's family size. Here the bishops could help women understand better the vision that the Church has of the family and motherhood that might inspire many women to become more committed to motherhood.

Section 76 calls for more instruction and that is excellent. But I often think that any instruction will constitute more instruction. That is, I have heard from many couples that their Church sponsored marriage preparations courses treated contraception as a acceptable option. They report that little enthusiasm was conveyed about NFP. And that seems their one and only chance to hear what the Church's teaching is. Sermons about contraception are virtually non-existent, nor do the adult education programs of a parish sponsor talks on the Church's teaching on contraception. Section 76 tells us that "Catholic theologians, spiritual directors, educators, psychologists, and experts in human sexuality provide courses in sex education and offer spiritual formation, but more needs to be done." Where are these courses being provided? I have been on Catholic campuses and know the state of most Catholic campuses. It is mighty difficult to find theologians, etc. who support the Church's

teaching. In fact, on many of the most notable Catholic campuses, such creatures are impossible to find.

Section 77 does mention NFP and that serious reasons are needed to use it. And it wisely strives to distinguish NFP from rhythm. All this is to the good. But we do hear that "some couples find natural family planning cumbersome and are not convinced of its effectiveness." It would be useful to know if they have tried it and for how long. Most of the Church's teaching on occasion can be "cumbersome" and not yield the results that we would like, but this is not a deficiency in the teaching.

The bishops are to be lauded for their willingness to be reflective about ways they and the Church may have been sexist. Are they also ready to reflect upon whether the institutions and offices under their control are pursuing policies fully in accord with Church teaching?

The document speaks to women as those who have been greatly wronged by society and by their Church. Everyone has been wronged in one way or another by society and maybe even sometimes by the Church. But the reform most of us are immediately responsible for is that within ourselves. I am eager to read a document that calls upon women to offer the distinctive kinds of service to Church and society suitable to their femininity. I am eager to hear women called upon to put family and home above their careers; to have more concern for the wellbeing of society than for their own personal advancement and pleasures. Being called to be a Christian is being called to a life of service and too little of that call is heard in the document. It is urged that women nurture their talents and skills but it seems more for the fulfillment of the women themselves than for the good of the whole.

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“Equality” in the Bishops’ Letter on Women

by Mary Ellen Bork

The bishops state at the beginning of their second draft of the Pastoral Letter on Women that they were cautioned many times to delay or abandon their project but chose to complete their task. They further state, “In our efforts to listen to extensive consultations in dialogue with the word of God and to be authentic teachers of the faith, we have had to advance arguments not always acceptable to some segments of the Christian community nor to a number of respected Catholic scholars.” (12) One has to ask which segments of the Christian community they mean.

I find I am one of the Christian and Catholic community unhappy with their framing the Catholic position on women as primarily an issue of equality. Moreover, their discussion of gender difference does little more than recognize basic differences without reflection on the influence of this difference on personal life. By their own admission the bishops are writing on a controversial subject in a controversial way. This may indicate that it is not ripe for publication as an official document which will only fuel further controversy.

In my view the letter’s major weakness is its easy acceptance of feminist rhetoric and the concepts and feelings that go with it and an exaggeration of the evils of sexism. All four sections of the letter deal with equality: equal as persons, equal as persons in relationship, equal as persons in the Church, and equal as persons in society. Equality is a laudable political goal and has been promoted in free democracies since before the French revolution. But equality also has enough ambiguity about it that it can be manipulated in many ways. Americans have never been clear in their political discourse whether they meant equality of opportunity or equality of result, a point under discussion in the Civil Rights Act of 1990.

In response to some women’s claims of oppression the bishops spell out many areas where equality should exist. But what kind of equality, of opportunity or of

result? They seem to dwell on results. The Catholic position on woman cannot be summed up by a search for more equality between men and women. By focusing so exclusively on equality the bishops show their desire to legitimize feminist complaints against the Church now and open the door to approaching future issues in a similar manner. This letter gives implicit approval and sympathy to those who are impatient with oppressive Church structures by speaking of women’s problems as those of “exclusion,” referring to Baptism as the “sacrament of equality,” etc. The Church has always recognized the equal dignity of man and woman and certainly we need to live it better. But there is more to the Catholic position on the human person and on the relations between men and women than equality, important as that is.

A second serious weakness in this letter is its refusal to develop the implications of gender difference. While acknowledging the diversity of men and women (18), who are created equal before God, they neglect to develop the implications of masculinity and femininity. They promote the feminist line of thought.

Women have not been recognized as autonomous persons. “However noble the vocation to marriage and motherhood may be, this approach tends to assume that the man is the norm for being a human person and that a woman’s identity is defined exclusively in reference to her husband.” (20) That is a debatable point, as the students at Wellsley and Barbara Bush have demonstrated.

Their argument continues that the divine image in the human person is shown through our sexuality but it is not necessary to assign traits to either sex. (26) They do not think that the sexes are “two halves of a whole” nor that “one is incomplete without a partner of the opposite sex.” (26) While saying there is a fundamental difference they stop short of describing it. “This distinctiveness is more fundamental than racial, cultural or ethnic differ-

ences.” (25)

Pope John Paul II offers a more profound discussion of this fundamental difference and encourages more study of the issue. In *Christifidelis Laici* and other documents he explains that the sexual difference “has been indelibly imprinted in the very being of the human person—men and women— and, therefore, in the makeup, meaning and deepest workings of the individual. This most wise and loving plan must be explored to discover all its richness of content.” (50) He several times calls for more study and research on the meaning of femininity and masculinity.

He distinguishes between what are the essential aspects of women and the evolving aspects. This distinction allows one to describe some traits that do not change without denying that there are aspects of women that do change. Within the structure of the Church he makes the distinction between the level of holiness in which we are united to Christ without distinction, and the level of function which in a hierarchical Church introduces some differences. In *Mulieris Dignitatem* he points out that women, because they are capable of motherhood, have a gift of attentiveness to the concrete needs of the human person. This would be an essential characteristic of woman. He also points out that the marriage relationship is the fundamental community ordained by God and that

the spirit of the marriage relationship should be the hallmark of relations between men and women, a reflection of the relationship of Christ and His Church. (*Christifidelis Laici*, 52) These distinctions give a more profound and nuanced understanding of woman in her relation to man. The bishops seem reluctant to spell out any differences between men and women or to define any roles. Perhaps they want to leave the door open to the inevitable pressure that will come from those discontented women who will continue to press for more functions and more power.

As an expression of the pastoral concern of America’s bishops this letter lacks: a discussion of anthropology that gives more than a superficial statement of the diversity of male and female and what that means for the Church; a serious discussion of the dangers of radical feminism (it is briefly mentioned in 132); an articulation of the spiritual discernment needed to weigh and sift conflicting ideas about women that are in the culture; a serious discussion of prayer; a criticism of the attitude of women who complain that they are oppressed in the Church (it is accepted as a given).

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On Language and Equality

by Lucinda Marrs

[ED. NOTE: Among the draft pastoral's principal short-term objectives is to use the authority of the bishops to endorse and promote feminist (or "inclusive") language in the Church's liturgy. In fact, strenuous efforts to change the language in which the Church worships and prays have been made by feminist liturgists and their collaborators for years, and revised texts and "guidelines" have been produced for this purpose. No doubt many bishops and priests genuinely believe that most Catholic women not only want the feminist changes in the language made, but are actually offended by the use of ordinary English. Pastors may readily accede to demands for change, believing that it is an essentially inconsequential concession which will make women "feel better" about the Church. Such a concession would be misguided.]

It is worth noting that significant scholarly contributions to the discussion of feminist politicization of the language have been made by women: Dr. Joyce Little of the University of St. Thomas in Houston, and Suzanne Scorson of Toronto, for example. Many literary scholars, liturgists, historians, political scientists, theologians, linguists, poets and ordinary users of English have noted with alarm the trend to force a living language into the confining mold of a particular ideology. WFF's May, 1989 joint statement on Feminism, Language and Liturgy (see Appendix I) responds, in part, to this problem.]

A discussion of generic "man" and generic "he" and "his" might start with the idea that words take their meanings from their context. As Thomas J. Cox, a linguist, has said "...the primary unit of semantic analysis is not the morpheme or even the word, but rather the sentence (and ultimately, its context). Rather than being the locus of these temporal, logical, and causal relationships, a given (verb) form or combination of forms

assumes these functions by its systemic occurrence in contexts from which these relations can be deduced."¹

From age to age, from Beowulf to Richard Wilbur, as Ralph Wright, O.S.B., has shown in his article "Generic Man Revisited," generic and specific "man" have existed side-by-side throughout English literature. As we English speakers learned grammar we learned quite easily that the context indicated whether "read" was past or present tense, or whether "reed" was meant. Generations of listeners and readers of English of whatever level of education have had no difficulty with "man" having two meanings.²

Given this long unbroken usage of "man" in both its forms, can one by fiat eliminate one of them from the language? Father Wright, in the same paper cited above, offers this view:

"Although sometimes we may pretend otherwise, when we are born and learn to speak we inherit a language. We do not inherit it as the potter inherits the clay — a highly malleable substance that can be formed in myriad ways. A language is more like a genetic code. At the moment of conception we are landed with our physical and even mental make-up and it has taken all the human beings down to our mother and father to produce the precise code that we are. Environment is going to have significant influence on how we turn out but if the genetic code has not provided the potential no mere environment will be able to substitute for it. The case with language is analogous. We may hope that our language rests freely in the hands of our literary experts, our grammarians or even our liturgists so that they are free to do with it what they will or what society bids them; in fact this freedom is severely limited. Those hands are tied. They are tied by all the literature, and all the oral tradition that comprise the genetic inheritance of a language, stretching from the distant past right up to the very moment when we ourselves learned how to speak. And,

because our language is living, it is constantly evolving and adapting and growing. New ideas, new discoveries, new inventions — all needing to be named. But there is an important distinction to be made between the creations of new words like “byte” or “biochemistry” and the manipulation of words already in the language which may already have a history of usage stretching back five hundred years or more. The way such words grow and develop is much more mysterious and only in a very limited sense can this growth be controlled by the editor or the grammarian. When the language is English, spoken by so many different peoples on the planet, this process is even more complex.”

Even if one could eliminate from English a word with such deeply-rooted usage, and the generic pronouns that go with it, what would be the results?

First: a confusion when reading our English literary heritage. Are we women to shift gears every time we read works from another century or culture and think, “am I included or not?” As Suzanne Scorsone says, “Many women, feminist women, and I among them, refuse to allow other feminists to exclude us from the word “man,” to which we have as much right as do men. We will not be excluded from all the English literature of the past fifteen hundred years, nor do we want a misdirected political agenda, however well-meaning, to create in us a false sense of consciousness-raised (or razed) “rage” every time we read the word “man” used in the generic sense. We love the English language and its literature too much, we understand it too well...”³

Second: degradation of literary style. Ask someone who is required by an editor to use inclusive language what grammatical distortions and displacements are necessary to cope with “him/her” and other gender-specific pronouns if the generic is eliminated. (Consider the difficulties of applying “inclusive” language to a Romance language where all adjectives and past participles have number and gender and must be used generically as well.)

Third: elimination of certain contexts such as God-

Man-Nature. As Suzanne Scorsone says: “The generic sense of ‘man’ carries its own connotations of emphasis on the individual person representing the whole (a form of synecdoche). It is only very imperfectly replaced by such alternatives as ‘person’ (Greek-derived, with its legal and role implications) or ‘human’ (Latin-derived, with the implied taxonomic distinction from animal, alien or even angelic species).”⁴

Fourth: Since poets, novelists, dramatists and translators continue to use generic man and its generic pronouns, as Wright’s paper shows, allowing “trade and textbook publishers, journalists, television commentators, and feminist grammarians [to act as] pace-setters for the development of the language”⁵ would be unwarranted and divisive.

Is this really what we want for the English language? Do we want our literary history and literary style forced through the grillwork of a radical feminist agenda? How much more “inclusive” might it be to teach the best of literary expression, no matter what its provenance, to allow a standard of literary excellence to prevail, and to allow our English language to flow unimpeded through ourselves to the generations to come?

1. Quoted in *The French Review*, Vol. 63, No. 5, April 1990, p. 908.

2. Even today in less lofty literary forms such as advertising, the generic man is obviously necessary in certain contexts. In an ad put out by MADD (“Mothers Against Drunk Drivers”) that I received in the mail last week the following quotations occur: “No man is such a conqueror as the man who has defeated himself.” — Henry Ward Beecher; “You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it in himself.” — Galileo; “Defeat never comes to any man until he admits it.” — Josephus Daniels.

3. “In the Image of God: Male, Female, and the Language of the Liturgy”, *Communio*, Spring, 1989.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Worship: Renewal to Practice*, by Mary Collins, O.S.B., p. 202.

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On Democracy and Doctrine

by the Rev. Paul Mankowski, S.J.

(an excerpt from a forthcoming essay, "Women and the Bishops" to appear in the November 1990 issue of *First Things*.)

"One in Christ Jesus" should stand as proof positive to the American episcopacy that corporate direction of its own teaching has been all but broken by the strategy of the past two decades. After seven years, two drafts, and several changes of committee, we are presented with a pastoral letter on the concerns of Catholic women wherein Mother Teresa's gift to the Church does not earn a mention, while the social analysis of Anne Wilson Schaefer does.

Some scholars of more sanguine temperament have maintained that there is no great cause for concern about this pastoral letter, since it will be "saved from significance" by its bulk and sheer unreadability. Yet the fact that it was produced at all points to some trends whose import is not so lightly dismissed. Shortly before his death, the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar remarked, "The decentralization of the Roman curia has led directly to the curialization of the diocese." Concomitant with this shift has been a huge increase in the bureaucratic size and complexity of the national episcopal conferences—the US Catholic Conference and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops employ 292 people in the central headquarters—and a corresponding swell of documentation. In the time from 1982 through 1988, the NCCB published 226 papers—44 in the last year alone.

There is at present a dispute among Catholic theologians about the theological status of episcopal conferences. The key question is: to what extent can a body of bishops assembled on the basis of political geography claim to speak with the doctrinal authority of the Church? I do not propose to offer an opinion on the subject, but it should be stressed that, whatever the right answer should be, its solution must assume that the bishops in question are able to read those propositions which they will be required to endorse. Yet how many of the nearly 400 US bishops could have read more than a fraction of the 44

papers issued in their name in 1988? The basis for making a particular judgment is not here at issue; the question is whether it is humanly possible for a bishop to know what he is asked to say "yes" to.

Is there a substantive sense in which the US bishops, as a body, still have control over the theology which is taught in their name? Before answering in the affirmative, there are several considerations which should give us pause. First, the number and size of the documents which the bishops have taken upon themselves to produce make it impossible that more than a small percentage of them should have an active hand in the writing of any single paper; since the bishops delegated to a given project recruit writers of diverse ability to help them, results at the committee level are often shaky. Still a bishop may reluctantly consent to a bad paper because the alternative scenarios are even worse.

Second, the complexities of single projects are magnified exponentially at the level of national consideration, where several documents are up for approval at the same time. Two factors are at work here. On one hand, the tiny ration of actual time for debate to the number of pages under discussion makes adequate analysis impossible. There is no way an American bishop can study the sentences he is asked to endorse. The way the bishops have chosen to speak on issues of immediate topical interest increases the pressure for a hasty decision, rather than lengthy and sober scrutiny.

Third, the structure of majority consent breeds among the bishops a "dynamic of collegial dialogue"—in plain English: cutting deals. A man may feel compelled to approve three documents he finds defective in exchange for a vote for one project which he believes more important. Since most documents are approved or rejected *in toto*, this greatly increases the chance of bad doctrine winning episcopal sanction.

Finally, the semi-public nature of the drafting pro-

cess and the fact that documents are released prior to voting means that the true impact of the bishops' theology may be considerably different from what they intend. Few people will deny that the secular media can grossly distort the Church's message by arbitrary distribution of emphasis, yet the procedure now in place ensures that any journalist who wishes has the opportunity to do just that. This is bad enough for those documents which the bishops decide or approve; it is *a fortiori* harmful in the case of those they don't.

In short, the picture does not inspire confidence. The bureaucracy of the USCC was conceived as a tool which would help the bishops spread their teaching; it has burgeoned into a policy-making machine with its own ideas of what the Church should be saying and which the bishops have found progressively difficult to control. Similarly, the decision to speak as bishops in the public sphere on issues of technical controversy and partisan dispute was intended to increase the contribution of the Church's wisdom to civil discourse. It is arguable that the

major political parties have changed the beliefs of Catholics more profoundly in the past twenty years than the Church has changed the beliefs of either politicians or Catholics. Several bishops have had to promulgate independent statements in the past few years precisely to counteract those of the USCC; Vatican interventions to rescue bishops from theological solecism are increasingly frequent.

Doctrinal control can be salvaged, provided the resolve necessary to make some major changes is quickened. "One in Christ Jesus" is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the regnant philosophy of management, and its flaws are so glaring that they point the way out of the morass: less Pop Psych, more of the Gospel; less paper, more scrutiny; fewer words, and those more carefully chosen. The course ahead requires discipline, imagination and spine. We may hope that our pastors will find it worth the effort.

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APPENDIX I

STATEMENT ON FEMINISM, LANGUAGE AND LITURGY

WOMEN FOR FAITH & FAMILY, CONSORTIUM PERFECTAE CARITATIS, FORUM OF MAJOR SUPERIORS

Because we are Catholic women who accept and affirm all the teachings of the Catholic Church, not only as true propositions but as the norms of our thought and life;

Because we are aware of the influence within the Church and in society of alien ideologies which attack the fundamental assumptions of Christianity about human life and of the relationship of human beings with their Creator, and which effectively undermine the Catholic Church;

Because we understand our responsibility as Catholics and as women to witness to the truth which the Catholic Church teaches and our willing and free acceptance of her just and true authority vested in the Magisterium of the Church, particularly in Christ's vicar, the Pope, and Bishops in union with him, we believe it our duty to make the following statement:

1. In our time and culture, ideological feminism, which denies the fundamental psychic and spiritual distinctiveness of the sexes and which devalues motherhood and the nurturing role of women in the family and in society, is often misrepresented as expressing the collective belief of women. As women, we are particularly concerned about the pervasive influence and the destructive effects on the Church, on families and on society of this "feminism."

2. As Catholics who have been formed, inspired and sustained by the Sacraments of the Church through participation in the liturgy, the Church's central action and principal means of transmission of the Catholic faith, we are strongly aware of the power of symbol in human consciousness. We therefore deplore attempts to distort and transform language and liturgy, both of which make such potent symbolic impressions on the human mind, to conform to a particular contemporary ideological agenda at odds with Catholic belief and practice.

3. We reaffirm our belief in the divine origin of the Church and that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, which is often criticized in our time as insufficiently egalitarian, was intentionally established by Christ, and that He selected the Apostles and Peter, among them, as head, giving them and their legitimate successors magisterial authority to guide His Church until He comes again.

4. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Word of God made man, was limited and restricted by His culture only in that which, apart from sin, limits man. But we also believe that He came in a time and to a people chosen by God. Thus, all that Jesus took up from His culture by His teaching or action is normative for every culture of every time and place. We reject the notion that Jesus Christ, God Incarnate, was limited or restricted in the fulfillment of the Mission entrusted to Him by the Father by the cultural context of His presence on Earth, His life as a Jew of the first third of the first century, or by any other factor.

5. Accordingly, we also reaffirm the constant teaching of the Catholic Church that ordained priesthood is not a "right" accorded to any member of the Church, but a state of life and a service to which, by Christ's will, only men, not women, may be called.

6. Following the teachings and example of Christ and the constant tradition of the Catholic Church, and mindful of its full significance, we consider it a privilege to call God 'Our Father,' a name which reflects not only the relationship between human beings and their Creator, but which also provides a powerful symbolic model for men of the steadfast love, faithfulness, justice, mercy, wisdom and objectivity which are ideal components of human fatherhood vital to women, to families and to the social order. Contemporary efforts to impute a 'feminine' aspect to the Godhead, by retrojection of alien and anachronistic notions into the body of Sacred Scripture, by forcibly changing the language used to refer to God, by deliberate reversion to pagan notions of deity, or by any other means, we regard as dangerously misguided and perverse.

7. Therefore we reject all attempts to impose ideologically motivated innovations on the liturgy of the Church or changes in official lectionaries or sacramentaries or catechisms in the name of 'justice' to women. We deplore the deliberate manipulation of liturgical actions, signs and symbols and the politicization of both liturgy and language which effectively impede both receiving and transmitting the Catholic faith and harm the unity of the Church.

8. For these reasons, we oppose the systematic elimination from Scripture translations, liturgical texts, hymns, homilies and general usage of 'man' as a generic. The claim that the language is "sexist" and that such changes are required as a sensitive pastoral response to women collectively is false. We believe that the symbolic effect of mandating such changes in the language and practice of the Catholic Church is negative and confusing, effectively undermining the authority of the Church and her hierarchy.

9. We also oppose changing the constant practice of the Church in such liturgical matters as acolytes or 'altar servers' and homilists, and repudiate the increasingly frequent practice of women saying parts of the Eucharistic Prayer with the priest or in his place or performing other liturgical functions reserved to ordained men.

10. We are grateful for the profound contribution of Pope John Paul II to our understanding of the meaning of human life and of the fundamental relationship of human beings with one another and with God through the many theological works he has given the Church during his pontificate, including his Apostolic Letter, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, which help to deepen our understanding of the centrality of the role of Christian women to the Church's evangelical mission. Constantly seeking the aid of the Holy Spirit, and in solidarity with the Pope, the Bishops in union with him, and with the universal Church, we pledge to respond to our Christian vocation with wisdom, with love and responsibility.

CONSORTIUM PERFECTAE CARITATIS

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WOMEN FOR FAITH & FAMILY

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APPENDIX II

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