

THE CATHOLIC CITIZEN

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Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave and give;
Who knows the gifts which you shall give,
Daughter of the Newer Eve?

Francis Thompson

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION IN CHRISTIANITY

By Rev. Pablo Idigoras

We are quite naturally scandalized when someone, basing his arguments on Biblical texts, tries to defend racial discrimination or to forbid marriages between persons of different races. We think it ridiculous also when someone tries to obscure Revelation by using texts, chosen here and there, and referring to situations different from those of our times.

And so when it is a question of excluding women from every approach to the altar, something which is permitted to a young boy, we think that such isolated texts, bound to a strictly limited circumstance, are in fact opposed to the general teaching of Revelation about the value of the human person in itself, beyond all distinction of race, sex or social condition.

Here, as in other aspects of theology, strange ideas and customs have become mixed with revealed data, and, for many people, have been finally identified with the latter.

It must be recalled that scholasticism, which worked out the theological synthesis on the sacraments, thought of woman as the passive element, the matter, the inactive partner in the process of generation. Man, on the other hand, signified the active element, the substantial form, the dynamic partner.

When this mentality was applied to the religious domain, it was natural to take as fundamental the passage in which St. Paul (1 Cor. 14,33 ff) states that a woman ought to remain silent in church and obey her husband at home, and ignore some more substantial texts.

The question which St. Thomas raised, whether women would have existed if there had been no original sin, is in itself symptomatic. It seemed that in the perfect order all would have been men because the woman is a diminution of the man.

If, however, we refer back to the Bible, we find that in the earthly paradise, the equality of man and woman is clearly affirmed. God created man to his own image and likeness, he made man and woman (Gen. 1,27). No sign of subordination of the female appears until after the sin, and only as a consequence of it (Gen. 3,16).

C'est tout naturellement que nous sommes scandalisées lorsqu'une voix ose, ici ou là, prendre la défense de la discrimination raciale, ou interdire les mariages entre personnes de races différentes, en se fondant sur des textes bibliques. Il nous paraît ridicule aussi qu'on prétende obscurcir la Révélation au moyen de textes occasionnels et se rapportant à des situations différentes de celles de nos jours.

Et pourtant, lorsqu'il s'agit d'exclure la femme de toute approche de l'autel, chose que l'on permet à un enfant de quelques années, il nous semble que tels textes isolés, liés à une circonstance bien déterminée, s'opposent à l'enseignement général de la Révélation sur la valeur de la personne humaine en soi, au-delà de toute différence de race, de sexe, de condition sociale.

Comme en d'autres aspects de la théologie, des idées et des habitudes étranges se sont mêlées ici aux données révélées et, aux yeux de beaucoup, ont fini par s'y identifier.

Il faut rappeler que la scolastique qui réalisa la synthèse théologique sur les sacrements concevait la femme comme l'élément passif, la matière, l'inactif dans le processus de génération. L'homme, au contraire, signifiait l'élément actif, la forme substantielle, la dynamique.

Cette mentalité passant au domaine de l'activité religieuse, il était naturel qu'on considérât comme fondamental le passage dans lequel saint Paul (1 Cor. 14,33 ss) déclare que la femme doit se taire à l'église et obéir à son mari chez elle, et qu'on ne prêtât point attention à d'autres textes plus substantiels.

La question que se pose saint Thomas d'Aquin, se demandant si les femmes auraient existé dans le cas où il n'y aurait pas eu le péché originel, est à elle seule symptomatic. Il semblait alors que dans l'ordre parfait tous auraient dû être des hommes, car la femme est une diminution de l'homme.

Si, toutefois nous nous reportons à la Bible, nous constatons que dans le paradis terrestre l'égalité de l'homme et de la femme est nettement affirmée. Dieu créa l'homme à son image et à sa ressem-

The Old Testament, which is the history of man under sin, shows us woman in a state of subjection and humiliated by polygamy. But even in these ancient texts, there are no passages which exclude women definitively from any function. Rather we find on occasion women acting in the three orders, of royalty, prophecy and the sacred service of the altar.

In the theocratic Kingdom of Israel, where God was the true monarch, a woman could receive the supreme dignity. Suffice it to mention here the names of Deborah (Jg. 4 & 5), Athalia (Kg. 11,13) and Alexandra Salome. And besides these, one finds also Esther, Judith and other women who show that for the Jews there was no veto excluding women from the supreme commission in the Kingdom of God.

As regards prophecy, one could mention Miriam, the sister of Moses (Ex. 15,20 ff; Num. 12,4 ff), Deborah again (Jg. 4,4) and Huldah, who was preferred before many male prophets, her contemporaries. (2 Kg. 22,14 ff) . . .

But the New Testament . . .

The New Testament comes to re-establish the primitive situation of Paradise, and with it the equality of all human beings, because of their spiritual personality (Gal. 3,26 ff). Female subjection, permitted by Moses because of sin, is brought to an end (Mt. 19,8 ff).

And thus it is not surprising that the first to recognize the divinity of Christ was a woman, Elizabeth (Lk. 1,43); nor that Jesus evangelized Samaria, the first approach to the Gentiles, through the intermediary of a woman who was truly his apostle (Jn. 4,39). We should not be astonished either that it was a group of women, deaconesses of Christ, who were the privileged eye-witnesses of his redeeming death and resurrection; or, even more remarkable, that it was a woman, Mary Magdalene, apostle of the Apostles, who taught the twelve in the hope of the resurrection. Nor finally, that the highest ideal of the Christian life on earth was Mary, Mother of the Saviour.

All this explains why women played so dynamic a role in the spread of the early Church. When the Holy Spirit came on the morning of Pentecost, it was several women meeting together who were amongst the first to receive him (Acts 1,14). The New Testament list of women active in evangelization is a long one. . . .

And at the end of the Apostolic period, this feminine activity in the Church is already hierarchically organized. St. Paul in his letters, when he speaks of deacons, distinguishes between men deacons and women deacons. And he demands the same qualities for the ministry from both of them (1 Tim. 3,8 ff).

And so Clement of Alexandria can rightly say: "the Apostles, working tirelessly at evangelization

blance, il le fit homme et femme (Gn. 1,27). Aucun signe de subordination féminine n'apparaît jusqu'après le péché, et comme conséquence de ce dernier (Gn. 3,16).

L'Ancien Testament, qui est l'histoire de l'homme sous le péché, nous montre la femme soumise et humiliée par la polygamie. Mais même dans ces textes archaïques on ne trouve aucun passage excluant définitivement la femme d'aucune fonction. Bien plus, nous voyons à l'occasion la femme agir dans le triple ordre de la royauté, de la prophétie et du service sacré de l'autel.

Dans le royaume théocratique d'Israël, où Dieu était le véritable monarque, la femme peut revêtir la dignité suprême. Qu'il suffise de citer les noms de Deborah (Jg. 4 et 5), d'Athalie (2 R. 11,13), ou d'Alexandra Salomé. Et, à côté d'elles on trouve aussi Esther, Judith et d'autres femmes qui témoignent que pour les Juifs il n'y avait aucun veto excluant la femme du mandat suprême dans le royaume de Dieu.

Quant à la prophétie, on peut citer Miryam, la soeur de Moïse (Ex. 15,20 ss; Nb. 12,4 ss) Deborah encore (Jg. 4,4) et Jolda qui est préférée à beaucoup d'autres prophètes masculins, ses contemporains (2 R. 22,41 ss) . . .

Mais Le Nouveau Testament . . .

Le Nouveau Testament vient rétablir la situation paradisiaque primitive, et avec elle l'égalité de tous les êtres humains, en raison de leur personnalité spirituelle (Ga. 3,26 ss). La soumission féminine, tolérée par Moïse à cause du péché, est levée (Mt. 19,8 ss).

Et voilà pourquoi nous ne nous étonnons plus de voir que c'est une femme, Elisabeth, qui fut la première à reconnaître la divinité du Christ (Lc. 1,43). Ni d'apprendre que Jésus évangélisa la Samarie, antichambre de la Gentilité, par l'intermédiaire d'une femme, qui fut son véritable apôtre (Jn. 4,39). Ni que c'est un groupe de femmes, diaconesses du Christ, qui furent les témoins oculaires privilégiés de sa mort rédemptrice et de sa résurrection. Ni, ce qui est plus surprenant encore, que c'est une femme, Marie-Madeleine, l'apôtre des Apôtres, qui apprit à ceux-ci l'espérance de la résurrection. Ni, enfin, que l'idéal le plus haut de la vie chrétienne sur la terre a été Marie, Mère du Sauveur.

Voilà qui explique que, dans la diffusion de l'Eglise primitive, la femme joua un rôle si dynamique. Lorsque vint l'Esprit Saint, au matin de la Pentecôte, c'est plusieurs femmes en réunion qui le reçurent comme prémices (Ac. 1,14). La liste est longue, dans le Nouveau Testament, des femmes actives dans l'évangélisation. . . .

Et à la fin de la période apostolique l'activité féminine dans l'Eglise est même déjà hiérarchiquement organisée. Dans ses lettres, lorsque saint Paul parle des diaques, il précise diaques hommes et

as their ministry required, chose women, not as wives but as sisters, as their fellow-workers, to contact the women who remained at home. Thanks to them, the Word of the Lord has been brought to women without scandal" (cf 1 Cor. 9,5).

In the Early Church

The early Church long retained for women this rank in the hierarchy. Nevertheless, it was soon to be overshadowed by another institution, which was also of apostolic origin, and which was flourishing, the organized religious life. . . .

Later, the success of the cenobitic religious life swept away all the feminine functions of authority and of service. That is why, even in the religious life, the consecration of abbesses like archeological relics of former living realities, began to die out. It came to be an imitation of the old authority of the woman deacon, which gradually lost its significance.

Thus the directive activity of women ended by being totally detached from the community; they retired definitively into the cloister and directed themselves exclusively to the service of charity, giving up the old function the deaconesses had fulfilled. . . .

Then came scholastic theology, which brought to its belittling conception of woman, the experience of a church in which women were secluded and kept out of all religious activity; they were active only behind the walls of convents.

But modern developments in science and in life have modified the old biological theories about woman. Sociology has taught us the coexistence of the masculine and the feminine in the soul of every human being. The sociological evolution has allowed woman to play an increasingly important role in all sectors of human activity. And as Pius XII said to Catholic women: "You can and should make your own, without restriction, the programme of the advancement of woman."

All domains are now opened to the directive activity of woman. Only the domain of religion has been forbidden her. There every hierarchical function remains reserved to men, and this because of the old scholastic theories and the fact that for several centuries there has been a social underdevelopment of women.

The anti-feminist arguments rely on the fact that God is presented to us in Revelation in masculine form. Christ himself took the flesh of a man. And the apostles he chose were men.

But these are quibbles rather than real arguments. Certainly the God of the Pentateuch is clearly virile, jealous, harsh, angry. But many other passages of the Bible point to the feminine "psychological characteristics" of God (Is. 49,15; 66,13; 42,14; Os. 11,4; Jer. 31,20).

We find in Jesus the description of a "weaker", more tender, more feminine God (Lk. 15) (Mt. 23, 37).

diaques femmes. Et des deux il exige pour le ministère des qualités semblables (1 Tm. 3,8 ss).

Aussi est-ce raison que Clément d'Alexandrie écrit: "Les Apôtres, travaillant sans repos à l'évangélisation conformément à leur ministère, prenaient quelques femmes, non comme épouses, mais comme soeurs, pour être leurs collaboratrices, pour toucher les femmes qui restaient au foyer. Grâce à elles, la parole du Seigneur a pénétré dans les gynécées sans soulever de suspicion". (Cf. 1 Cor. 9,5).

Dans L'Eglise Primitive

Longtemps, l'Eglise primitive conserva aux femmes ce rang dans la hiérarchie. Il se trouve toutefois bien vite obscurci par une autre institution qui avait également des racines apostoliques et était très florissante: la vie religieuse organisée. . . .

Ensuite, le succès de la vie religieuse cenobitique entraîna avec lui toutes les fonctions féminines d'autorité et de service. C'est pour cela que, même dans la vie religieuse, perdurèrent, comme des restes archéologiques d'anciennes réalités vivantes, les consécérations des abbesses, qui en sont venues à être une imitation de l'ancienne autorité de la femme diaque, laquelle perd peu à peu sa signification.

Ainsi l'activité dirigeante de la femme finit par se trouver tout à fait détachée de la communauté, elle se réfugia définitivement dans le cloître et s'orienta uniquement vers le service de la charité, abandonnant l'ancienne mission qu'avaient remplie les diaconesses.

C'est alors que naît la théologie scolastique qui, à sa conception dépréciative de la femme joint l'expérience d'une Eglise dans laquelle la femme est recluse et écartée de toute activité sacrée: elle n'agit que derrière les murs des couvents.

Mais le développement moderne de la science et de la vie a modifié les vieilles théories biologiques sur la femme. La sociologie nous a enseigné l'ambiguïté du masculin et du féminin dans l'âme de chaque être humain. L'évolution sociologique a permis à la femme de jouer un rôle toujours plus important dans tous les secteurs de l'activité humaine. Et, comme le disait Pie XII aux femmes catholiques: "Vous pouvez et vous devez faire vôtre, sans restrictions, le programme de la promotion de la femme".

Tous les domaines se sont maintenant ouverts à l'activité dirigeante de la femme. Seul le domaine du sacré lui a été interdit. Toute fonction d'ordre y reste réservée à l'homme. Et les raisons en sont toujours les vieilles théories scolastiques ainsi que la pratique de plusieurs siècles de sous-développement social de la femme.

On insiste, lorsqu'on cherche des arguments anti-féministes, sur le fait que Dieu nous est présenté, dans la Révélation, sous un aspect masculin. Le Christ lui-même a pris chair d'homme. Et les apôtres qu'il se choisit furent tous des hommes.

Finally, it is clear that if man in his double masculine and feminine form, is the image of God, the "characteristics" of both should be found pre-eminently in God.

Apostolic Factors

The fact that Christ and the Apostles belonged exclusively to the male sex might be due largely to the conditions of the time, when the woman had only a limited social activity. And yet we have seen that woman in her diaconal role also contributed to the spreading of the Gospel.

But if there is some significance in this essentially male character of the first generation of the Apostles, what strikes us as more profoundly theological is the fact that the Church and the attitude of all her members before God are clearly feminine. The Church is a bride (Eph. 5.25; Cor. 11.2). Religion has a feminine task to perform on the cultural level: to soothe, to unite. This is the work of a mother, in contrast to the skills of a man. That is why the Church is virgin and mother. Her bridegroom is God, who is the partner of every soul.

So we are sad to observe that so many profound aspects of Revelation are neglected, that one-sided arguments are founded on a few texts of Paul that refer to limited circumstances already past in every respect; texts which, moreover, indicate a certain sort of discrimination and limitation. Neither the Bible nor Tradition offers any explicit prohibition designed to keep women out of the sacred ministry of Christianity. . . .

We hope that theologians will approach this great problem with a breadth of vision, paying more attention to the magisterium of the modern Church than to certain passages of St. Paul. The conciliar Constitution on the Church tells us: "In Christ and in the Church there is no inequality of race or of nation, of social condition or of sex." . . .

Thus it is a question of the integrity of the Gospel in the full recognition of the dignity of woman. It is a question of necessary and urgent help in the apostolate. It is a question of bringing out the full consequence of the words of Revelation, even where custom or sheer habit might regard them as strange or scandalous.

[Reprinted, by kind permission, from *Pax Romana Journal* (1966-3)].

Contributions to "The Catholic Citizen"

Items for inclusion in the January-February issue of *The Catholic Citizen* should reach the office by December 28th. It would be appreciated if all copy were typed with double spacing on strong paper; on thin paper the typescript fades and becomes illegible. We look forward to receiving news items etc. from all Sections of the Alliance.

Mais il s'agit-là davantage d'arguties que de véritables arguments. Il est certain que le Dieu du Pentateuque est nettement viril, jaloux, sévère, colérique. Mais nombre d'autres passages de la Bible nous donnent de Dieu des "traits psychologiques" féminins (Is. 49,15; 66,13; 42,14; Os. 11,4; Jr. 31,20).

En Jésus nous trouvons la description d'un Dieu plus "faible", plus tendre, plus féminin (Lc. 15). . . .

Il est évident enfin que si l'homme est l'image de Dieu, en sa double forme masculine et féminine, les "traits" des deux devront se rencontrer de façon éminente en Dieu.

Des Motifs Apostoliques

Si le Christ et les Apôtres appartenaient exclusivement au genre masculin, il se peut que cela tienne en grande partie aux conditions de l'époque, où la femme n'avait qu'une activité sociale réduite. Et cependant nous avons vu que dans son rôle diaconal la femme a aussi contribué à la diffusion de l'Évangile.

Mais si ce trait essentiellement masculin de la première génération des Apôtres a une signification, plus profondément théologique nous apparaît le fait que l'Église et que l'attitude de tous ses membres devant Dieu sont nettement féminines. L'Église est épouse (Ep. 5,25; 2 Cor. 11,2). La religion a une mission féminine à remplir au plan de la culture: adoucir, unir. Oeuvre maternelle, face à la technique virile. C'est pour cela que l'Église est vierge et mère. Epouse devant Dieu, qui est époux de toutes les âmes.

D'où notre tristesse à constater que tant d'aspects profonds de la Révélation ne soient pas retenus, qu'on se fonde unilatéralement sur quelques textes de Paul se référant à des circonstances déterminées et déjà révolues en tous domaines. Textes qui, par ailleurs, signifient d'une certaine manière discrimination et limitation. La Bible, elle, ne fait aucun interdit explicite, ni la Tradition non plus, qui viserait à écarter la femme du ministère sacré dans le christianisme. . . .

Nous espérons que les théologiens aborderont avec largeur de vue ce grand problème, prêtant davantage attention au magistère moderne de l'Église qu'à certains passages de saint Paul. La Constitution conciliaire sur l'Église nous dit: "Dans le Christ et dans l'Église, il n'y a aucune inégalité au regard de la race ou de la nation de la condition sociale ou du sexe."

Il s'agit par conséquent de l'intégrité de l'Évangile dans la pleine reconnaissance de la dignité de la femme. Il s'agit de l'aide nécessaire urgente à l'apostolat. Il s'agit de porter à leurs pleines conséquences les paroles de la Révélation, même en ce que l'usage, ou l'habitude mondaine, peut nous présenter comme étrange, ou scandaleux.

(Informations Catholiques Internationales No. 245-246 "Tribune Libre". Reproduit avec la permission aimable du rédacteur en chef.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Dispensations

The Catholic Standard of October 28th reported that a blind priest, ordained by special dispensation, has celebrated his first Mass and will be in charge of a parish in Yugoslavia; and that a man born a deaf-mute, who has taken twenty years learning to speak, is to be ordained as a deacon and will read the epistle and gospel, and deliver the sermon at the ordination ceremony.

In the same paper we are told of the "reserved instruction" issued by the congregation of the Sacraments whereby bishops may now permit mother superiors of convents to distribute Holy Communion to their community in the absence of a priest, deacon or other cleric, in very special cases, and only in the privacy of their convent chapels.

These items of news illustrate how being a woman is still regarded as a greater disability in the service of the Church than the deprivation of the sense of sight or hearing.

Munificence of the Weaker Sex

Father J. O'Sullivan, Professor of Sociology and Theology at Saint Paul Seminary, Minnesota, United States of America, addressing married women at a branch of the National Council of Women at Berchtesgaden, Germany, spoke of the benefits of marriage as a source of "unique joy" to women: "Someone chose you, gave you the gift of status, the only attempt at understanding which will again come your way; half a man's life on a platter; a built-in best friend; someone to play with" etc. He urged the women to "take care" of their husbands, "because they won't and can't do it themselves".

(*Catholic Standard*, 28th Oct. 1966)

It would appear to some that such helpless partners would be the ones deriving the greater benefits from the marriage. As for "status"—in the Christian Church only one should be recognised, the status of being sons and daughters of God.

Symbolism Depleted

When symbolism is deprived of its symbolic character it becomes meaningless.

Ida F. Görres, writing against the ordination of women (*The Ampleforth Journal*, June 1966), says: "If the marriage emblem is to make sense at all, it implies two separate and different partners. Their difference constitutes the possibility of their union; their relation makes possible that commercium vitae—exchange of life—of which theology speaks and on which their spiritual fecundity depends. . . . When a bishop dies his diocese is called widowed, not orphaned. . . . How are women to assume this impersonation of Christ?"

Is it possible to imagine a more inappropriate blending of symbolism and concretism, of theology and biology? It seems unfair to suggest that theologians would generally support the misuse of apt and profound symbolic images, and yet these muddled opinions continue to be quoted with approbation.

Exposing False Notions

The article on page 1 by Father Idigoras, a Peruvian Jesuit, Professor of the Pontifical University of Lima, is a resumé, drawn up by Father Idigoras himself, of a broader study he made on the mission of women in salvation history. "It is not," according to *Pax Romana*, "an attempt to elaborate a theory about the nature of womanhood, but rather an attempt to 'debunk' some widely-held notions concerning what the Bible and Tradition are supposed to hold as sacred regarding the image of woman."

In the September 1965 issue of *The Catholic Citizen*, Doctor Shattock under the title "Theological Exercise" reviewed Father Idigoras' thesis, *Women in Holy Orders*, for which he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Theology.

The Education of Girls

To say that every woman should be able to find complete fulfilment in motherhood is as silly as saying that every soldier is a hero.

Since the tendency is for men to die before women, bringing up girls to be exclusively wives and mothers can bring their lives to a tragic full-stop long before they die: or even hasten their death. (Nova, Nov. 1966)

The Report on Sex and Morality (S C M Press, 2s.), prepared for the British Council of Churches was, unfortunately, released for discussion on T.V. and for reportage in the national press before it became available to the general reading public. This resulted in a spread of superficial opinions about a work that requires careful reading before a just assessment of it can be made. Worse still it led to a highlighting of that suggestion in the Report with which we could not agree, and which has indeed already been rejected by the Council of Churches.

The most important part of the Report, that is the greater part of it, and the actual recommendations, are concerned with a vitally important subject, the necessity of education in personal relationships: in other words teaching in detail how to fulfil the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." For this the Report merits careful consideration as has recently been pointed out by the more responsible commentators in both the Catholic and non-Catholic press.

THE UNITED NATIONS

The Third Committee (July 1966)

Mr. Baroody (Saudi Arabia) proposed that the Draft Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should be put last on the agenda and that four meetings would be sufficient to consider it. He added that the complete emancipation of women might be prejudicial to traditions and customs which in his view represent very important values. Mrs. Kovantseva (USSR) thought that the Draft should be given first priority. Finally, on the suggestion of the Chairman, Mr. Fernandini (Peru) it was decided to give seven meetings to the Draft and make it the fourth item on the agenda.

The Commission on the Status of Women

Mr. Burgos (Panama) said that Articles 5, 6 and 10 of the draft declaration were extremely technical and should be carefully studied by other bodies. He had been told, in regard to Article 6, Paragraph 2(d), that in the event of a dispute, the question of the choice of domicile and residence would be decided by a social or legal tribunal; which was not satisfactory. In 1948 the Committee on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had dealt with the case of diplomats marrying nationals of the countries in which they were stationed, and subsequently being faced with a refusal by the Governments of those countries to allow their wives to leave. Such Governments would have no difficulty in obtaining from their own nationals who had married foreign diplomats a statement given "freely" that they chose to remain in their home countries, which would be entirely in accordance with the provision of Article 6(d).

Mrs. Tillet (United States of America) said that it had been generally agreed at the various seminars organized by the Commission on the Status of Women in different regions that the co-operation and encouragement of men were essential if progress was to be made in eradicating injustice against women in developed and developing countries alike. It was, therefore, significant that in the Council's meetings, where the majority of participants were men, the atmosphere had been frank, friendly and sympathetic.

At the eighteenth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Nepalese representative had testified to the impact of the United Nations in the eradication of discrimination against women and had described the new legislation concerning marriage which had been introduced in her country. At the present session of the Council, the representative of Pakistan had explained that free consent to marriage was not contrary to Islamic principles, and, at the Asian seminar held at Tokyo, where practically all the great religions of the world had been represented, none of the representatives had taken exception to the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages.

THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Canada

The only degree-granting Canadian Women's College has decided to act as a centre for the study of women's role, by dedicating its library to this purpose. The President of the College, Sr. Alice Miichael, says that this will enable anyone who wishes to undertake research on women to find in the library of the College the best material available.

Greece

To a journalist's wish for a "sturdy boy", after King Constantine's announcement that Queen Anne-Marie was expecting their second child, the King retorted, "Why? What have you got against girls?" (*The Times*, 17.10.1966)

Jordan

Preparatory work is being undertaken for changes in electoral laws which will lead to the political emancipation of Jordanian women.

The Netherlands

The General Synod of the Netherland's Reformed Church has opted for unapposed admission of women theologians to the pastorate.

The Philippines

Helena Benitz, this year's chairman of UNO's Status of Women Commission, has been elected Rector of Manila's Women's University succeeding her mother in this appointment. (*Schweizer Frauenblatt*, October 1966)

Tunisia

The first woman magistrate of the Country, Emma Chtioul, is continuing her studies at the Centre des Etudes Juridiques in Paris.

Switzerland (Basle)

L'année 1965/66 a été pour les bâloises une année pleine de décisions importantes. En Octobre 1965, elles ont pu prendre part pour la seconde fois aux élections du Conseil bourgeois. La participation des femmes au scrutin n'a peut être pas tout à fait répondu à ce qu'on en attendait. Néanmoins, les deux conseillères bourgeoises catholiques ont été réélues par un grand nombre de voix. Après les élections du pouvoir exécutif du conseil, une troisième candidate fut élue. Actuellement, il y a 15 femmes sur 40 membres du conseil.

Les 26 et 27 juin, nous avons eu la grande satisfaction d'obtenir les droits politiques sur le plan cantonal de Bâle-Ville. Des deux côtés, la propagande fut menée d'une manière très active. Notons que les femmes ne s'étaient intentionnellement pas mises en évidence, et que la jeune génération avait fait de grands efforts pour un bon résultat.

NOTES FROM GERMANY

In December 1964, the German Bundestag asked the Federal Government to draw up a report about the situation of women in the Federal Republic and, furthermore, to make suggestions as to how improvements could be made.

The Government has now completed the first part of its task. The report serves to indicate quite clearly that, despite the legal equality of man and woman, the woman is at a disadvantage in every field.

Thirty-three per cent of all women in the Federal Republic are out at work, that is thirty-six per cent of the total working population. The majority of women are in subordinate or middle-range jobs; they are often relegated to inferior jobs and given lower paid work. In 1965 only five per cent of all top Civil Servants were female. In education girls are at a disadvantage; fifty per cent of primary school pupils are girls but only forty-one per cent go to secondary schools. Of these only thirty-six per cent stay to take the school leaving examination.

There are only thirty-seven women in the Bundestag which comprises five hundred and eighteen members.

Public opinion is still full of prejudice against women having positions equal to men. A one-sided picture of woman as wife and mother is still prevalent, although economically and socially society expects the woman to prove herself in all fields.

Our member Maria Müller-Lütgenau is the first woman barrister to be admitted to the synodal court of the archbishopric of Cologne.

Dr. Anna Lucas, member of St. Joan's Alliance, the owner of a well-known bookshop in Münster, celebrated with her family the remarkable fact that the bookshop, publishing-house and printing-office have been in possession of the family for 375 years. In the festive ceremony, the Bishop of Münster, Dr. Höffner, appreciated particularly the important rôle played by the women of this family, who in the course of eleven generations often undertook the management when there was no male successor.

U.K.

The members and friends of St. Joan's have once again paid tribute to our cause. The very generous response in connection with the Christmas Fair has resulted in the splendid sum of £148 being raised. In the traditional way assistance has arrived at the opportune moment, and we are all most grateful.

(The winning numbers in the draw were: whisky—432; sherry—642; table napkins—444; biscuits—30.)

NOTES FROM THE U.S.A.

Canon Law Reform

Among the five points proposed for study and experimentation by a recent seminar of the Canon Law Society of America, Number 5 reads as follows:

"Full participation of women in the life of the Church."

The NCWC release reporting the seminar adds that the group "stopped short of urging ordination for women but some of the participants felt the idea could be embodied in the 'full participation' wordage". It was also pointed out that the recommendations are not those of the Canon Law Society itself which will, at its forthcoming convention, adopt resolutions in the name of the full body.

Read it and Weep

The *National Catholic Reporter* recently carried the following item: "The Catholic Women's League should make its own decisions without subjecting them to a clerical veto," says Bishop T. J. McCarthy of St. Catherine's, Ontario, Canada, national director. "But the women want to be vetoed," says Mrs. Christian T. den Ouden, new president of the Edmonton archdiocesan chapter of the League. Bishop McCarthy was objecting to a provision of the Constitution which says that a priest can override the League decisions. "With that provision," the Bishop said, "all this talk of the lay apostolate doesn't mean anything." Mrs. den Ouden felt strongly that "we need directors to guide us and that priests usually have a good reason if they are against anything."

"... Into the Highways and Byways"

Fr. Joseph H. Fichter, eminent Jesuit sociologist, is giving a course on *Religion and Women* at the Harvard School of Divinity. At a recent conference of vocational directors he said that a number of available sources of priestly vocations have not been tapped. The Church should consider ordaining women and married men. Father Fichter believes that bishops now have the authority to ordain women. "The question is how far are the bishops ready to go in changing a man-made structure so that the number of priests can be increased?"

Father Fichter mentioned an "articulate minority of Catholic women . . . who are asking for equal status with men in the Church."

The "articulate minority" is now corresponding with Father Fichter.

THE WAY OF FLORENCE BARRY

The pamphlet is now obtainable from the London office. Price 5/- (minimum), postage extra.

TO THE PRESS, WITH THANKS

International communication is now so efficient that news reaches all centres almost simultaneously. When women broke the silence of two millenia by speaking of their wish to serve the Church more fully, as men now serve her, this was news: it spread to every continent and was published in many languages. The reaction it evoked was different from what its initiators had expected, for it aroused no public indignation, no raillery and no ecclesiastical comment—only a murmur here and there.

The women who had broken the silence had related their requests to the expression of their Faith and they had dissipated controversy by affirming that radical changes of this kind could be introduced only by the Church's reinterpretation of the Divine Will in changing human circumstances. The changes they had requested were of immense importance, for they concerned "one-half of the human race" as one of the Conciliar Fathers had said in his allocution to the Vatican Council. Before that great Council, it had seemed hardly decent to mention any relation of woman to the Church "not only to which she belonged, but which she was".

The Pontificate of Pope John, and the Council itself offered the possibility of a reappraisal. This too was news! It was seized and broadcast by the press. Surprisingly it evoked little antagonism, much less than its originators had expected, and was received more or less as the reasonable comment of woman on her persisting exclusion from the whole of the Church's official life and councils. What comment there was made was encouraging; it seemed that it was only the imposition of silence which had obscured the issue, so that our indebtedness to the Press increased with the ever widening dissemination of our petitions in press reports. It is almost exceptional now to pick up a paper or journal, whether national or not, whether "religious" or not, which does not sometimes contain a reference to the subject. It is obviously impossible to refer to all these publications, but members may be interested to be given a random sample, taken from the large collection which has reached our office, sent by agencies, by friends, or in exchange for *The Catholic Citizen*. It may serve to express our great indebtedness to the Press.

The names of these publications is given in no special order, but all are of recent date: they may contain no more than the notice of a meeting, sometimes a report, a review, a letter to the editor or a lengthy original article; all are precious in that they focussed attention on a subject which could in no other way have been brought to the attention of the world. We are indebted to the *Catholic Herald*, *The Universe* and *Catholic Times*, *Search*, *The Ampleforth Journal*, the *Sunday Times*, *The Economist*, *The Guardian*, *Informations Internationales Catholiques*, *Le Monde*,

ST. JOAN'S ALLIANCE

Patron: Saint Joan of Arc Colours Blue, White and Gold

OBJECT

To band together all interested Catholics in order to secure religious, political, social and economic equality between men and women in every part of the world.

MEMBERSHIP

All Catholic women who approve the aims and methods, and who will pay a minimum annual subscription of £2 (which includes *The Catholic Citizen*), are eligible to become Members. Men are invited to join as Associates.

JOURNAL

The Catholic Citizen, £1 per annum, two shillings per copy.

Editorial Office—17d Dryden Chambers,
119 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the Alliance.

Herder's Correspondence, Réalité, The Catholic Standard, Osservatore Romano, Pax Romana, Commonwealth, Time, Oakland Tribune, National Catholic Reporter, Malaysian Catholic News, Sign Magazine, Catholic World, Centro Femenino Buenos Aires, Davenport Catholic Messenger, La Libre Belgique, Conseil de Femmes Belges, Christliche Sonntag, Schweizer Frauenblatt, Canadian Register, The Critic, the Globe and Mail, San Francisco News, Call Bulletin, San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco Examiner, Monitor, Tribune, Liguorian, The Calcutta Herald, The Bombay Examiner, and many others. To them all our thanks for precious collaboration.

F. Mackenzie Shattock

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