

# SHEKINAH

April-June

1982

## The Mother Eagle Feminine Images of God

by

Virginia

Ramey

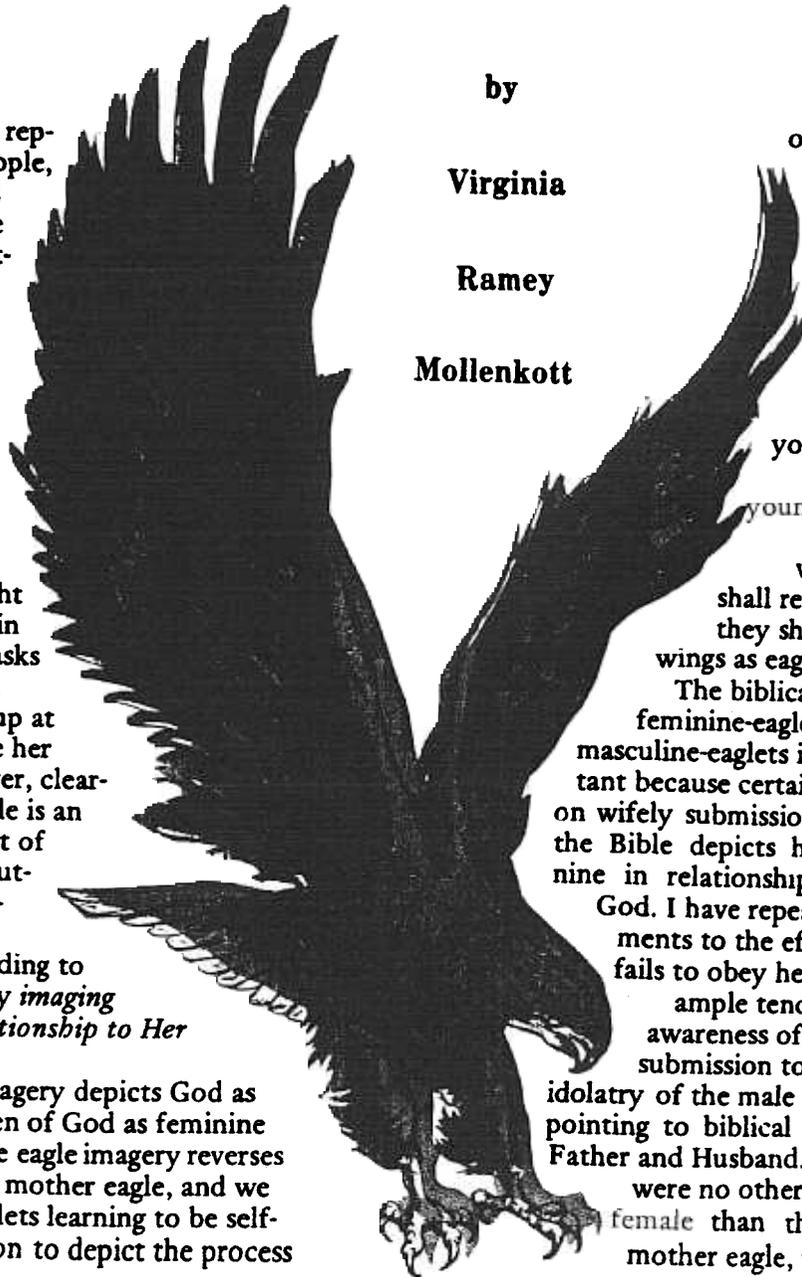
Mollenkott

Speaking of Jacob as representing the Lord's people, Deuteronomy 32:11-12 comments, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him...." Similarly, Exodus 19:4 pictures the Lord as telling the children of Israel, "I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." And in Job 39:27-30 the Lord asks Job from the whirlwind, "Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?" The answer, clearly, is that the female eagle is an expression of the will not of Job, but of God; and Deuteronomy and Exodus depict the female eagle not simply as behaving according to God's will, but as actually *imaging the nature of God in relationship to Her children.*

Whereas traditional imagery depicts God as masculine and the children of God as feminine in relationship to Him, the eagle imagery reverses that equation. God is the mother eagle, and we human beings are the eaglets learning to be self-sustaining (Job 39 goes on to depict the process

of the mother eagle's teaching the eaglets to hunt). Where the sex of the young eagles is suggested or specified, it seems to be masculine,<sup>1</sup> as in Isaiah 40:31-32: "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles...."

The biblical image of God-as-feminine-eagle and humanity-as-masculine-eaglets is especially important because certain Christians insist on wifely submission on the basis that the Bible depicts humanity as feminine in relationship to a masculine God. I have repeatedly heard statements to the effect that if a wife fails to obey her husband, her example tends to erode human awareness of proper creaturely submission to the Creator. This idolatry of the male is thinly veiled by pointing to biblical images of God as Father and Husband. But even if there were no other images of God as female than the ones of the mother eagle, they alone should



be enough to explode the notion that it was God's intention for one sex to be subordinate to another because of a divine-human parallel. Furthermore, the mother eagle images depict a God who is *actively trying to create equals by empowering the eaglets* to take care of themselves. Hence the images do not encourage dominance and submission even in our relationship with the Creator, let alone our relationships with other human beings!

In Exodus 19, Deuteronomy 32, and Job 39, the image depicts the mother eagle teaching her eaglets to fly and to hunt their own food. She takes them on her wings, swoops downward suddenly to force them into solo flight, and then stays close to swoop under them again whenever they grow too weary to continue on their own. What a picture of a loving God, caring nurturantly for us when we are weak, yet always aiming at the goal of our maturity and internalized strength rather than at morbid dependency upon a force external to ourselves!

Several years ago I had a memorable dream of an eagle. It was sitting inside a huge circus tent or building, on a post or piling that stood just above my eye-level. From this

consulted my books on dreams and symbols and was told that because eagles are identified with the sun and with male fertilization, with high flight and with speed, they symbolize the Father, Divine Majesty, domination, and heroism. Dante, I was reminded, calls the eagle "the bird of God." So while I was glad to be dreaming of God's tenderness toward me, still as a feminist I felt discouraged that my unconscious mind was handing up masculine God-symbols to tell me how sexist my deep mind continued to be. Because until recently I viewed eagles only as they were filtered through the interpretative grid provided by my symbol-books, I did not even notice that the Bible several times depicted God as a *female eagle*.

By a similar process, most of us have associated eagles with warlike dominance rather than with pacifism. But like the nurturant eagle images in Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Job, the use of eagles' wings in Revelation 12 seems a very deliberate reversal of any militaristic association. Whereas the center of the chapter uses the image of a war in heaven, the first and final portions depict the

wilderness, into her place" and thus defeat the desire of the serpent to destroy her. To a feminist heart it is cause for great rejoicing that in this passage the divine purpose is centered upon a woman who not only *gives birth to the divine* (her child is immediately snatched up to God's throne), but who *symbolically assumes divinity* when she is given the wings of a great eagle. The association here of the female with life and pacifism as opposed to death, war, and militarism ties in with the statements in Genesis that Eve is the mother of all the living and that there would always be enmity between her and the serpent, her seed and the serpent's seed. The world is a militaristic powder-keg today largely because of its sexist assumptions, which warp our understanding of what power is all about—as witness our instant association of the eagle with dominance rather than nurturance. Fortunately, when we can clear up the confusion caused by our interpretive grid, the Bible provides us with healing caused by our interpretive grid, the Bible provides us with healing insights.

Genesis 1:2 tells us that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The word *rachapah*, here translated "moved upon" or "hovered," also means "to shake" and "to flutter." The word is used only three times in the Old Testament, and only twice concerning God's action. The only use of *rachapah* concerning God other than Genesis 1:2 occurs when Deuteronomy 32:11-12 depicts God as the female eagle fluttering over her young. So although the enormous influence of Milton's *Paradise Lost* has taught us to see Genesis 1:2 as a dove image, the similar use of *rachapah* makes it more probable that the very first image in the Bible is of God as a mother eagle fluttering over the waters as She gives birth to the universe.

In Egyptian hieroglyphics, the letter A is represented by the eagle, standing for the Origin of all things and the warmth of life. We women are only reclaiming our biblical and cultural heritage when we see that Origin not in terms of masculine impregnation, but rather in terms of feminine involvement in the birth and nurturing process. God is our Mother-Eagle.<sup>1</sup> In Her we safely put our trust.

## Our God Is Like an Eagle

(to be sung to the tune, "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus")

When Israel camped in Sinai, then Moses heard from God.  
This message tell the people, and give them this my word,  
From Egypt I was with you and carried on my wing,  
The whole of your great nation from slav'ry I did bring.

Just as a mother eagle who helps her young to fly,  
I am a mother to you; your needs I will supply.  
And you are as my children, my own who hear my voice,  
I am a mother to you, the people of my choice.

If God is like an eagle who helps her young to fly,  
And God is also father, then what of you and I?  
We have no fear of labels; we have no fear of roles,  
If God's own being blends them, we seek the selfsame goal.

Our God is not a woman; our God is not a man.  
Our God is both and neither; our God is I who am.  
From all the roles that bind us, our God has set us free.  
What freedom does God give us? The freedom just to be.

Words by Laurence G. Bernier, 1974. "Our God Is Like an Eagle" appears in the UFMCC Trial Hymnal, UFMCC, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 304, Los Angeles, CA 90029. The Trial Hymnal is available for \$4.50.

perch the eagle gazed down into my eyes with the most infinite, amused, tender love I have ever seen (except in the eyes of my angel with the golden eyelids—but that was in another dream!). The next day I

triumph of a woman and the seed of the woman through purely non-violent means. Among these pacifistic methods we find that "to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the

See The Mother Eagle on page 13

Saturday, April 10, 1982

Los Angeles Times

# 'New' Concepts in Christianity

## Revive Ancient Ideas

### Is Holy Spirit Best Seen as Female?

By JOHN DART, *Times Religion Writer*

A dozen years ago, some Christian feminists began half-seriously referring to God as "she" while struggling with the heavily masculine images of the Creator.

Eventually, it was widely agreed that the biblical God embraces both genders.

But that left the problem of the pronoun unresolved. In an era when women religious leaders have challenged church-as-usual, how could the feminine dimension of the Deity be expressed?

A new response is taking shape quietly in Christian theological circles: Recognize the Holy Spirit as female.

The Holy Spirit—or God's Spirit—plays varied roles in Judeo-Christian traditions—acting in Creation, imparting wisdom and inspiring Old Testament prophets. The Holy Spirit of the New Testament is the presence of God in the world and a power in the birth and life of Jesus.

#### **Holy Spirit Well-Established**

The Holy Spirit, rendered the "Holy Ghost" in the 1611 King James Version of the Bible, was well-established as a partner in the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit after doctrinal controversies of the late 4th Century. Churches today speak of "gifts of the Spirit" (especially tongues-speaking Pentecostals) and of guidance from the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit is not called "it," despite the fact that the New Testament, written in Greek, uses a neuter noun, *pneuma*. Church doctrine regards the Holy Spirit as a person, not a force like magnetism. "He" is used to match the pronoun for God.

Referring to the Holy Spirit as "she" draws some linguistic justification from the Hebrew word for "spirit"—*ruach*, a noun of the feminine gender.

So far, the voices advocating a feminine Holy Spirit are scattered and subtle.

But for them, it is a view theologically defensible and accompanied by psychological and sociological benefits.

"in effect makes us deprived children of a one-parent family." He said people tend to project onto God the concept of a human father who gives support on condition of performance.

"At that stage, we do not really expect justification by faith," he said, "we're still trying to meet goals."

Drawing on certain biblical pic-

The academic study of Christian roots is often spurred in new directions by manuscript discoveries or contemporary movements. It sometimes develops ideas seemingly heretical at first blush to the churchgoer. For that reason, and because of the scholarly jargon and unfinished nature of most theological debates, most churches do not keep members posted—in spite of the potential impact on central beliefs.

These reports look at two concepts in their early stages: a major thesis on the earliest Christian beliefs about the Resurrection and a developing debate on the appropriate gender for the Holy Spirit.

German theologian Jurgen Moltmann, a well-known thinker in mainline Protestantism, says "monotheism is monarchism." He says a traditional idea of God's absolute power "generally provides the justification for earthly domination"—from the emperors and despots of history to 20th Century dictators.

Moltmann argues for a new appreciation of the "persons" of the Trinity and the community or family model it presents for human relations.

A Moltmann lecture in Pennsylvania about the feminine aspects of the Holy Spirit prompted Neill Q. Hamilton, professor of New Testament at Drew University School of Theology, to develop the idea further in his own writings, which are aimed at church people rather than theologians.

Emphasis on God as a father figure, Hamilton said in an interview,

of the Spirit, notably in the Gospel of John, Christians will find that "the Holy Spirit begins to perform a mothering role for us that is unconditional acceptance, love and caring." Hamilton said. "God then begins to parent us in father and mother modes."

A Catholic scholar, Franz Mayr, a philosophy professor at the University of Portland in Oregon, also favors the recognition of the Holy Spirit as feminine. He contends that the traditional unity of God would not have to be watered down as a result.

Mayr, who studied under theologian Karl Rahner, said he came to his view during his study of the writings of St. Augustine (AD 354-430). That influential church father decried the lingering beliefs of some Christians that the Holy Spirit was "mother of the Son of God and wife of the Father," saying that was a

pagan outlook.

But Mayr contends that Augustine "skipped over the social and maternal aspect of God," which Mayr thinks is best seen in the Holy Spirit.

#### Some Feminists Object

Ironically men, not women, are raising the possibility of a maternal Spirit. The concept strikes some feminists as unfair.

"It's two against one" in a reconceived Trinity of Father, Mother and Son, one woman scholar said wryly.

A suggestion to describe the Holy Spirit as feminine was made in 1979 by Joan Chamberlain Engelsman of Drew University in "The Feminine Dimension of the Divine."

"The Holy Spirit is the least sexually defined member of the Trinity and . . . it is often symbolized by female images—by fire and the dove," she wrote.

(The Holy Spirit comes upon Jesus in the form of a dove in the New Testament stories of Jesus' baptism. Historians of religion note that the dove was often associated with female deities in the ancient Near East.)

But Engelsman named two other choices feminist theology might make: (1) Add a fourth member to the godhead in the person of the Virgin Mary or (2) develop the feminine aspects of each member of the Trinity.

Asked recently by telephone which alternative she prefers, Engelsman named the latter.

The only woman apparently pushing the idea of the feminine Spirit actively is Lois Roden of Waco, Tex., a fundamentalist-oriented sect leader who began her effort after a personal revelation. The 65-year-old widow has traveled to Jesus rallies and the recent National Religious Broadcasters convention to try to catch the unsympathetic ears of conservative evangelicals.

Regardless of how naturally the mental picture of a "divine family" occurs in church upon the mention of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Christianity has historically labeled it an apostate idea typical of ancient religions.

That may not have been the case at all times and places in the church's history, however.

A 14th Century fresco in a small Catholic church southeast of Munich depicts a female Spirit as part of the Holy Trinity, according to Leonard Swidler of Temple University. The woman and two bearded figures flanking her appear to be wrapped in a single cloak and joined in their lower halves, Swidler wrote in "Biblical Affirmations of Women."

And, most significantly, manu-

have demonstrated that more early Christians than previously thought regarded the Holy Spirit as the Mother of Jesus.

St. Jerome, a contemporary of Augustine's, and two church fathers of an earlier period, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, quoted from "The Gospel of the Hebrews," which depicted the Holy Spirit as a mother figure.

The gospel tells of the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus at his baptism. She says, "My Son, in all the prophets was I waiting for you that you should come and I might rest in you . . ." In the same gospel, Jesus says, "Even so did my mother, the Holy Spirit, take me by one of my hairs and carry me away to the great mountain Tabor." (Mt. Tabor is in Galilee.)

#### 'Mother of All Creation'

The 3rd Century "Acts of Thomas," a legendary account of the apostle Thomas' travels to India, contains prayers invoking the Holy Spirit as "the Mother of all creation" and "compassionate mother," among other titles.

These two sources were belittled by theology Professor Paul K. Jewett of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena.

"Both of these apocryphal works are late 2nd or 3rd-Century documents, belonging to the rubric of

*Please see DEBATE, Page 12*



## what the people are saying



I am at the Earlham School of Religion and I am doing work on Feminist Theology. I am specifically doing work on Female images of God. I have heard Virginia Mollenkott's lecture comparing God to the image of a "mother eagle." I see that you have listed as a back copy "as an eagle." Could you send a copy of that issue. I would also be grateful for any other information which you could send.

Paul Kriese  
Richmond, Indiana

I'm really intrigued by your two last issues of the Shekinah. It is interesting

to know that so many people from the world can see that there is a mother in the Godhead and our own church members cannot. For one to cling to the idea that the King James Version says the Holy Spirit is 'He' and it can be nothing else is overlooking the fact that there are many other words also in the King James that do not now convey the same meaning as the translators intended it to mean. One must realize words take on new meaning as the decades go by. Also to sum it all up, the message of the Holy Spirit is the last of the Godhead to be revealed so therefore God intentionally hid the truth about the Holy Spirit to a

great extent until the appointed time to reveal it. In my research I came across a book entitled 'The Bible in the Making,' by Geddes MacGregor which list over 300 words that are misleading in the King James Version. However I still maintain that God allowed the important truths to remain intact in the Bible while on the other hand He reserves certain truths until the time of His choosing. May God continue to bless and sustain you in proving to the world that we also have a Heavenly Mother.

Jean Burton  
Whitby, Ontario, Canada  
(See Letters, page 11)

# THE MAGNA CHARTA OF WOMAN

By Jessie Penn-Lewis

## PART 1

### Introduction

"It is incumbent upon Christian women to explain themselves," writes the Editor of *The Living Way*, published in California. "They profess, as Christians, obedience to the Word of God. They think that St. Paul forbade women to speak in public, and that he discountenanced women teachers of the Bible. Yet they teach and pray and preach; and they do not even 'veil' when they do these things. . . . With [women] rests the responsibility to explain the Apostle Paul in a convincing manner, as not in opposition to their conduct. It is not enough for a woman to say 'I must leave such matters to better scholars than I; but in the meantime I will teach or preach, because I know the Spirit prompts me to do so.' [But] a woman who is called to 'preach' is likewise called to an understanding of the Word which will agree with that inward voice. It is the Word and the Spirit by which we must be led. . . . Perhaps

in days past it was impossible for women to grasp the means of solving these problems that face the Christian women—*why the Holy Spirit should seem to move in one direction*, and the Bible point the other way, but that day has passed. Our colleges and universities are open to women. They can study Greek and Hebrew, with all essential help, as well as men. And now they should surmount these mental and spiritual perplexities. . . . They should equip themselves, as biblical scholars, to explain St. Paul as not at variance with their practice, or else they should keep silence in the churches. . . ."

The editor who writes thus exactly expresses the present situation. The hour has come when it is necessary that "Christian women should explain themselves," if the work of women in the service of Christ is not to lag behind the work of women in the world. The emancipation of women has burst upon the world as one of the epoch-making results of the Great War. It is now im-

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possible to stay the advancing tide. The noble work of the women of the country has, it is admitted, saved the British Empire. Many men who believed that women were "called" and "fitted" only for domestic life may be said to owe their lives to the womanhood of the nation proving the falsity of their theory.

The question now is whether the *Christian* women, in their witness for Christ, are to share in this emancipation or are they to be kept back while their confreres in the world have every door opened to them. The question also goes much deeper than this. It touches the authority and infallibility of the Word of God and its divine fitness to meet the needs of every generation. It cannot be that the women of today are to be liberated for full share in the *work of the world* and at the same time have restrictions placed upon them in the *work of God*. For if this be so, all the emancipated women of the world must consent to retire to a narrower sphere of service when they become Christians, morally bound to conform their lives to the written Word of God.

In this matter the Bible itself is challenged. Is it "out of date" for the guidance of the women of today? It has consequently become imperative that Christian women themselves should now search into this question and "explain themselves" and their true status from these Scriptures, so that it may be seen that the Bible is not an antiquated Book, out of harmony with the present times. The Church of Christ *as it was originally constituted*, without the addition of centuries of man-made laws, is not out of harmony with the principles of all the successive movements of God in the world itself.

But where are the Christian women to obtain the knowledge necessary for thus independently searching the Scriptures, seeing that there are but few with the training necessary for such inde-

pendent research? "The hour produces the man" is a saying which can be altered into "The hour produces the woman," to meet the woman's need of knowledge on this vital subject.

"We are acquainted with a woman," writes the editor of *The Living Way*, "who has taken the matter very seriously. Katharine Bushnell, M.D., feeling called to a public ministry, early resolved that her practice and teaching should correspond. She would not let her zeal outrun her reverence for St. Paul and his instructions. If the voice within could not be silenced in its demand that she preach and teach the Word of God, then that same voice could be relied upon to teach her how her call could be consistent with God's Word. Years of prayerful meditation over the Word, patient, persistent study of the sacred languages, and a delving in all works on Bible exposition promising any help (God placing within her reach the great libraries of England<sup>1</sup>), have brought an abundant reward. She has recorded some of the results of these years of research in a Bible correspondence course for women—so that other women can 'enter into her labours,' and begin their studies where she has left off."

Dr. Bushnell was an intimate colleague of the late Mrs. Josephine Butler, who, on the eve of her death, gave her a last charge that with her knowledge of the original languages of the Bible she would devote herself to the educating of her sex in God's teaching about women in the Scriptures. In accordance with this promise, Dr. Bushnell has for years been conducting a Bible correspondence course for women, with the lessons issued in mimeograph sheets at periodic intervals. Again and again she was urged to give forth her knowledge in print, but her reply was that the time had not yet come. But now at the psychological moment when the minds of men have been opened by the discovery of the dormant capa-

1. E.g., The British Museum and the Gladstone Library at Hawarden.

bilities of women, she has been manifestly guided of God to issue the first series of lessons in book form, under the title of *God's Word to Women*.<sup>2</sup> They cover the whole ground of the status of womanhood from the beginning in the book of Genesis to the teaching of Paul in the New Testament. The lessons open up the Scriptures in a way which can only be described as containing a revelation direct from God to those who have sought to be faithfully obedient to the Spirit of God in His leadings to public service, convinced that in His own season God would bring to light the true meaning of the words of St. Paul which *appeared* to be opposed to the known mind of the Holy Spirit in their personal experience.

We gratefully recognize also that Dr. Bushnell, in doing this invaluable service to Christian women at this time, does her work with scholarly dignity and soberness of language, revealing the mind of a true scholar, whose only concern is to arrive at *truth* and not, as prejudiced persons might suppose, as a "woman" herself, endeavoring to stretch any possible point to prove her case. She also repudiates any "desire to discuss 'which is the greater in the Kingdom of Heaven, man or woman,' as an unworthy question to raise at all," and is concerned only that women, as women, should know and fulfill their destiny as ordained of God. Emphatically, too, she acknowledges the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God, with the early chapters of Genesis as true history. She says, "We are convinced that they are history, and to women very valuable history. But even if we did not believe this, women could not afford to ignore them, for the sufferings of women from a false interpretation of their teachings, have been no unreality. . . ."

Thank God, at last with the aid of this God-given light Christian women can "explain themselves," and thank God still more that the in-

fallible Word of God is proved to be the very "Word of God" in truth by the harmony of its bed-rock principles with the world movements of God in the present day. The sovereign Lord of the universe, who is bringing about the liberation of nationalities, is also emancipating womanhood from the bondage of centuries and thereby proving himself again to be the God of the Bible. He has never changed His original purpose toward the creatures He made, and never decreed, as theology, colored by Judaism, has taught, that in the dispensation of grace the largest number of His redeemed church should be relegated to a lower status than that which was given to them through the atoning work of the Son of God.

Many may say that there is no need to trouble about Paul's supposed teachings today since women in general have won their freedom and nothing can ever put them back where they were before the Great War. But, in fact, the need to explain the Apostle's language is greater, for the tide of liberation will not reach the *Christian women*, those who are born of the Spirit and seek to conform their lives to the Word of God, unless they can be shown that their liberation is in harmony with that Word. For this they must understand for themselves their true destiny as revealed in the Scriptures of truth, or else they will hold back from fulfilling the purpose of God for them in these closing days of the Age. Other women who know not God will fill the leading positions which are increasingly being opened to them on every hand.

When God's time comes to remove a veil from His Word, nothing can hinder the fulfillment of His will. He is sovereign Lord of the universe, and He has permitted for some good purpose the centuries of misrepresentation and misinterpretation of His mind concerning women, even though the "trail of the serpent" is visible all along the

2. Published by the author, Oakland, CA.

line. We believe it will be a cause of unspeakable thankfulness to multitudes of Christian women when they know the truth, for the dark shadow of Paul's (supposed) relegation of them to perpetual subordination on account of Eve's deception has clouded their spiritual sense of the justice of God and their apprehension of the fullness of the gospel message. Christian men, too, who have known the truth in their inner consciousness will rejoice in the light now given.

Reviewing Dr. Bushnell's book, we are bound to say it is singularly free from extravagances. Her language is restrained and dignified. Sometimes we find a little sarcasm, but knowing what she knows and having seen what she has seen of the results in the world of the Gen. 3:16 misinterpretation, nothing but the grace of God has enabled her to write so temperately.

Here and there may be some "thoughts" which might seem farfetched, but they are as legitimate an exegesis of the text as any others and do not affect any vital and fundamental New Testament doctrine. For instance, she says that she cannot find the place "where the Bible says that Eve was expelled from Eden." "Adam was thrust out with a flaming sword between him and the tree of life, lest he put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Gen. 3:22). But since Eve was "living" spiritually, there was no such need to cut her off from the tree! "He drove out the *man*." Dr. Bushnell continues, "I choose to believe that something of the odours of Eden have enveloped Motherhood ever since creation." If deep hidden instinct is any evidence of an intuitive knowledge of some facts of life as they exist in the sight of God, Dr. Bushnell's faith is shared by men and women alike, many of whom own that there is no more beauti-

ful reminder of Eden with its odors than the picture of a young mother with her newborn child. Dr. Bushnell suggests, too, that if Eve had heeded God's warning that she was "turning" to Adam and what the consequences would be, not yielding to this "turning," Adam might have been saved from the effects of his fall. Who is to say that this was not so? William Law declares that Adam lost much of his perfection before Eve was formed, and she was elaborated to prevent "worse effects of his fall, and to prepare a means of his recovery."

Concerning the sending forth of this edition, I refer to some reasons for its issue from the spiritual standpoint at the close, but here I would say in connection with the original book itself that I am constrained to send out part of its message in this simple form because (1) the complete edition is so full of deep, solid information that many women who need its truths may not have the foundational knowledge for grasping at this time, and (2) the book has had to be issued at a price which is prohibitive to widespread circulation while the need for knowledge of the truths it contains is urgent.

It is my hope, therefore, that this edition will be a signpost, pointing those who desire full knowledge of the subject to the original book, *God's Word for Women*, which contains much which has not been touched upon here, such as "God's law of marriage" and other deeply vital aspects of the theme. With Dr. Bushnell's permission, I have sought to give as simply as possible the main points of some of the lessons concerning those aspects of the subject which affect the ministry of Christian women in the service of God.

Jessie Penn-Lewis, 1919

To be continued in the next issue of SHEKINAH

TORONTO STAR, SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1982/G11

# Women's influence promises to change Christian Church

A vast revolution is stirring deep in the heart of Christianity around the world — one which is pregnant with meaning, not just for women, who are 50 per cent of Christendom, but for every church member.

Women are gradually "taking back the church" (to use a current slogan of the more militant Christian feminists) and traditional theology will never be the same again.

The present, male-dominated view of God will be radically altered once women and the female principle are accorded the full equality which growing millions are convinced the Spirit of Truth commands.

A masculine God, made in the image of centuries of males, has been characterized by a harsh, aggressive, competitiveness which lent itself as easily to the blessing of unlimited wars as to exploitative social systems.

But, once the sexism is gone, once it becomes natural to think — as Pope John Paul I, "Papa Luciani", once said during his brief, 34-day reign — of God as Mother as well as Father, the very concept of God (Himself or Herself) is changed.

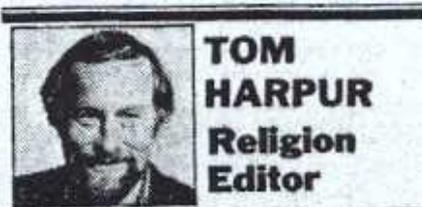
For example, the recent christening of a Trident, nuclear "Corpus Christi" — or the Body of Christ — becomes a gross blasphemy if God is a God of tenderness and mercy, of motherly caring for all intended victims of Trident's earth-scorching arsenal.

Never again should it be possible for men to take the implements of butchery and go against their fellows with a church's blessing and the cry "Gott mit uns," God is on our side, ringing in their ears.

## Theological colleges

The signs of the coming revolution are everywhere to be seen. In Canada, the past few years have seen the ordination of women to full ministry in the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, and Presbyterian Churches.

The United Church, which has had women clergy almost since its founding in 1925, now has Rt. Rev. Lois



**TOM HARPUR**  
Religion Editor

Wilson as its Moderator. This year, 50 per cent of students who entered United Church theological colleges were female.

Canadian Catholics for Women's Ordination, an organization of Roman Catholic men and women seeking the admission of women to the priesthood, was formed last summer and is rapidly growing.

Its American counterpart, the Women's Ordination Conference, has some 2,000 members, including nuns, priests, and lay people.

Most significantly, recent reports reveal that many women across the United States have lost patience with Vatican resistance to change on this issue and are initiating it themselves.

Thus, in a few female religious communities, women claiming a call to the priesthood have been unofficially ordained by their fellow members and are secretly celebrating mass.

This is like an echo of the 11 Episcopalian women who were ordained by retired bishops in Philadelphia on July 29, 1974, some three years before the Episcopal (U.S. Anglican) Church formally moved to accept women priests.

The National Catholic Reporter, the best-known and most widely distributed of independent Catholic newsweeklies, Kansas City, Missouri, ran a first-person story of one such "priest" on July 17, 1981, under the heading:

"God called me; my community ordained me."

On a much broader scale, American Catholic women, lay and religious, are reported to be developing eucharistic rites, or "para-liturgies" in which they meet to break bread and share wine "in the name of

Jesus" and without benefit of any ordained clergy.

They meet in "upper rooms," homes, mother houses of the various religious orders, and conference halls from Boston to Berkeley — usually in small groups which rarely go above a dozen.

The exact number of such groups is impossible to ascertain because they are "underground" for fear of excommunication or other church penalties.

The current issue of the Witness, an Episcopalian monthly — devoted entirely to this new phenomenon — quotes Archbishop John F. Whealon, of Hartford, Conn., as saying:

"I would have to tell anyone doing



**Breaking bread:** Unidentified American woman celebrates an illegal form of Roman Catholic mass.

that, if they are Roman Catholics, then they are breaking the canonic rule of the church and in danger of severe punishment."

Nevertheless, the women involved in such gatherings say they intend to continue and that the fact of women celebrating eucharist "is breaking through and growing world-wide."

In Canada, numerous sources contacted said the irregular or even "heretical" eucharists by women are happening here as well. But, no one would admit to firsthand experience, nor venture an estimate of the prevalence of the phenomenon.

### Second class

One leader for a large, women's religious order told *The Star* she knew of no such services herself, but "I can well understand why some women take this route in the face of their growing frustration at being second class citizens in their church."

"Somebody has got to make a move on this matter and it sure doesn't look as though it's going to be the other side."

While Canadian Roman Catholic bishops have made eloquent pleas for women priests at World Synods of

Bishops, most notably the one on the priesthood, Pope John Paul II has made it repeatedly plain that women cannot be priests because Jesus was male and (sic) instituted an all-male priesthood.

However, the Pontifical Biblical Commission and the Catholic Biblical Association have both issued statements that careful examination of the New Testament provides no theological obstacle to women clergy.

Several women interviewed, including members of Canadian Catholics for Women's Ordination



COLIN McCONNELL/TORONTO STAR

**Now a priest:** Toronto's first Anglican woman priest, Rev. Marjory Pezzack, was ordained in 1977. The United, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Baptist

churches have women ministers and there is growing pressure among Roman Catholic women for full ordination

(CCWO), said that the chief development in Canada — for example, among women in religious communities — is that of para-liturgies in place of calling in a priest to say mass.

These may, at times, include bread and wine, but the actual words of the mass are not used. Most frequently, the service is a "liturgy of the word" involving Bible readings and prayers. Occasionally, some ritual such as anointing with oil is used to express communal oneness in place of a male-led eucharist.

Fr. Alan McCormack, Chancellor for Spiritual Affairs for the Archdiocese of Toronto, said he knows of no group holding para-eucharists here but that such "borderline activity" would be regrettable.

"It would be a regrettable splitting of hairs to come so close to acting out a mass and not say so. It would be blasphemous and a heretical act with heavy penalties if anyone not a priest actually intended to institute a Catholic eucharist."

Sister Margaret Brennan, who is a member of the American Women's Ordination Conference and teaches pastoral theology at Regis College, Toronto, said that real change in the church hardly ever comes from the top. She quoted the famous Dutch theologian, Edward Schillebeeckx, who, in his book on the ministry says that today's "irregularities" — when they truly reflect the lived experience of Christians — become tomorrow's orthodoxy. Change comes from the bottom up, and then is recognized by the whole church.

An obvious and startling example of this came in the dramatic change from Latin to the vernacular in the mass, following Vatican II. When the

approval came from above, it ratified what had been advocated by many at the grassroots for years before.

At St. Michael's College, Prof. Ellen Leonard, who teaches New Testament, also referred to Schillebeeckx' thesis. She said she herself has a traditional respect for church discipline and so does not approve of attempted, irregular eucharists by women. But she added:

"There is a great heightening of awareness among Catholic women everywhere that it is a strange situation always to have a male, from outside the community, come in to celebrate mass — especially when you form a worshipping community yourselves."

### Official form

Clair Richard, a parish worker at St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church, said she, too, is a traditionalist regarding the mass, but that she knows of Toronto groups of women who would share bread and wine without actually using the official form for a mass.

"There are different meanings of eucharist. To break bread and share wine in the name of Christ doesn't necessarily mean you are attempting to institute the Sacrament reserved for priests."

Like most of the women interviewed, Richard believes that until the church fully recognizes the equality of women, it is not preaching or practising justice.

"When the church says, 'Okay, there are no more men, perhaps we'll see some action.'"

In 1968, there were 9,039 diocesan

priests in Canada and 11,849 priests in religious orders, for a total of 20,888.

This dropped to 7,740 diocesan and 5,449 religious by 1973, for a total of 13,189.

Last year, the number of diocesan priests was 7,340, and of religious, 5,286, for a total of 12,626.

But, from 1968 to 1981 the Canadians population increased enormously and the Catholic population went from 8,547,795 to 10,425,087 — an increase of about 2 million.

Increased use of married deacons and "extraordinary ministers" together with greater use of lay people in non-sacramental tasks has eased the burden somewhat. But, faced with an aging, diminishing priesthood, the Catholic Church is in obvious crisis which admitting women to priesthood could help.

The women themselves, however, insist that if and when that day comes, they want a radically changed concept of priesthood itself.

As a spokesperson for the American Women's Ordination Conference put it in a phone interview:

"Many of our women would not enter upon ordination as presently viewed by the hierarchy. They want a non-celibate, non-hierarchical, mutual type of ministry in which women don't merely fit into a stereotyped role but can freely make their own, unique contribution."

She added that whether or not her church decides to ordain women in her lifetime is irrelevant to the fact that God is clearly calling Christian women everywhere into "a new moment" created by His Spirit. That's what the current revolution is all about.

## Letters

A friend showed me her last issue of your magazine. I am very much interested in women and women's issues and the magazine she showed me was filled with feminist topics that I would like very much to have read. Would you please put me on your mailing list and see that I get the last issue.

Alberta Frances McBride, SSM  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Since publishing my name in the ULC paper, I have been deluged with a lot of religious and commercial \*#@\*. Yours is

the only serious, intelligent, even scholarly mailing I have gotten, and I want to thank you. I have long believed that women are nuts for adoring a male God and even crazier for supporting churches like the Roman Catholics and Mormons who clearly hold woman are inferior and unworthy of priesthood. Your magazine is excellent and I'd love to see future issues. I give my wholehearted support to your idea and your efforts. Good Luck.

Bishop Raymond F. Morin D.D.  
Detroit, Michigan

There is a small group here which I belong to. This group discusses creation

and I feel we shall find the 'Shekinah' an indispensable source to aid our liberations. Kindly place us on your mailing list. I would be very grateful if you could post me the April 1981 and subsequent issues of the Shekinah covering the thesis by Monese Barron.

Leo S. Ahiably  
Accra, Ghana

I am so excited about the writings in the SHEKINAH. I being a truth searcher, it comes very much to my understanding. I believe very much to what it relates to.

I have many old books which confirms it. I have a book called *Sears History of* (See Letters, page 13)

# DEBATE: Is Holy Spirit Feminine?

Continued from page 4

romance rather than history . . ." Jewett wrote in a book published last year. Current suggestions to think of the Holy Spirit as feminine have historical precedent only among "obscure and heretical sects on the periphery of the Christian church," Jewett said.

However, Jewett relied on research that had neglected the discovery in 1945 of the Nag Hammadi Library, some 50 texts buried in a jar in upper Egypt by monks in about AD 400. The subsequent translations and studies of the texts brought to light not only the views of Gnostic Christians attacked as heretics from the 2nd Century onward, but also traces of early Christian thinking.

The best-known find was "The Gospel of Thomas," a collection of 114 sayings attributed to Jesus. One of its principal American analysts, Harvard's Helmut Koester, believes that it was composed about the same time as the biblical gospels in the 1st Century.



A 14th-Century fresco, left, in small Catholic church southeast of Munich, West Germany, depicts a female Spirit as part of Holy Trinity, ac-

## Considered Historically Valuable

Koester and a number of other New Testament scholars term the "Gospel of Thomas" and a few other apocryphal works as historically valuable.

In one "Gospel of Thomas" saying, Jesus declares that his disciples must hate their earthly parents (as in Luke 14:26) but love the Father and Mother as he does, "for my mother (gave me falsehood), but (my) true (Moth-

er) gave me life."

In another Nag Hammadi discovery, "The Secret Book of James," Jesus refers to himself as "the son of the Holy Spirit."

These two sayings do not identify the Holy Spirit as mother of Jesus, but more than one scholar has interpreted them to mean that the maternal Holy Spirit is intended.

"The Gospel of Philip," a clearly Gnostic Christian text recovered at Nag Hammadi, refers repeatedly to the Holy Spirit as a mother figure—for both believers and Jesus.

## Tradition in Error

The tradition that Mary conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit is in error, asserts "The Gospel of Philip." "They do not know what they are saying. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman?" the gospel author asked.

The feminine Holy Spirit appeared to linger longest in favor among Syrian Christians in Edessa. That is the site where the gospels of Thomas and Philip and "The Acts of Thomas" may have been composed or finally edited. A 4th-Century orthodox Christian, Aphraates, wrote in a homily, "A man who is yet unmarried loves and honors God his father and the Holy Spirit his mother."

Elaine Pagels, one of the Nag Hammadi editors, contends in "The Gnostic Gospels" that female imagery for God was lost to the church because of a political-ideological battle between freewheeling, Gnostic-oriented Christians and victorious, organization-minded orthodoxy.

Pagels' contributions to discussions on the female aspects of the Deity have been as a historian, however, not as a theologian recommending beliefs.

The numbers of women studying religion in universities and seminaries is increasing, but few are writing theology.

"A genuine feminist reconstruction of systematic theology is yet to be written," declared Catholic scholar Rosemary R. Ruether in a recent review of women's religious studies.

Women tend to go in one of three directions, Ruether said.

The evangelical feminists hope to "clean up sexism" in the Scriptures through better analysis, she said. Others are abandoning the Judeo-Christian framework to celebrate womanhood through an evolving Goddess religion.

## 'Liberationist' Alternative

Ruether prefers a third alternative that she calls "liberationist." In it, she said, "Biblical sexism is not denied, but it loses its authority."

Religious feminists loyal to the churches, for all their daring in eliminating unnecessary masculine wording in worship services and religious literature, have seldom reached into the apocryphal Christian writings for feminine imagery.

Many may be unfamiliar with the material and its historical context. Others may be resigned to the church's usual rejection of writings once deemed heretical.

Fuller Seminary's Paul Jewett said, as a conservative, he looks to the New Testament sources as the only authoritative ones—"not simply as an accident of history but rather due to the divine leading of God's Spirit in the early church."

Another evangelical scholar, Donald G. Bloesch, recently conceded that the Holy Spirit could be portrayed as feminine "as the indwelling presence of God within the church, nurturing and bringing to birth souls for the kingdom." But, Bloesch added in recently published "Is the Bible Sexist?," the Spirit who acts on humanity with transforming power "is properly designated as masculine."

In gauging the appeal of the concept, or lack of it, the

key might lie in watching the grammar of theologians and biblical scholars.

All but the careful reader would have missed the "she" referring to the Holy Spirit in a Christian Century article by biblical authority James A. Sanders.

It was not a typographical error, said Sanders, a professor at the School of Theology at Claremont and president of the Ancient Bible Manuscript Center for Preservation and Research.

Mentioning the impossibility of alluding to God as "he/she" to recognize the Deity's nature, Sanders said his use of the feminine pronoun for the Holy Spirit "is just a choice I have made."

## The Mother Eagle *Continued from page 2*

### ENDNOTES

It would of course be absurd to conclude that because the eaglet image is addressed to males, the image excludes females from God's "nest." Males were understood to be the human norm in the Old Testament culture, so the maleness must be interpreted as inclusive of the female.

A booklet published in June 1981, entitled *As an Eagle: The Holy Spirit Mother, has just reached me*. It is available from Lois I. Roden, publisher of a free feminist newsletter called *SHEkinah*, P.O. Box 4098, Waco, TX 76705. As much as I sympathize with Lois Roden's attempts to prove that the Holy Spirit is the feminine component of the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Mother, and the Son), I think we are wiser to stick to the Bible's own usage, which is to associate feminine as well as masculine and neuter imagery with all



three Persons of the Godhead. This practice seems wiser for two reasons: (1) because there is intrinsic value in reflecting biblical usage rather than departing from it, and (2) from a political perspective, limiting female God-language only to the Holy Spirit still creates an image of the Godhead in which the female is outnumbered, eternally outvoted in a two-to-one power bloc. As facetious as it may seem to speak of political conflict within the Godhead, women's experience within patriarchy teaches us to be very wary about the images we adapt.

Virginia would be happy to hear from anyone who would like to suggest feminine images of God that they would like to see treated in future columns, especially if people will recount their particular reasons for loving a certain image. Address: Route 3, Box 139, Hewitt, NJ 07421.

### CORRECTION FROM PAGE 4

The bottom of the middle column on page 4 has a line missing and should read as follows:

And, most significantly, manuscript discoveries of recent decades have demonstrated that more early Christians than previously thought regarded the Holy Spirit as the Mother of Jesus.

### Letters

*the Bible*, year 1842, which tells about the Near Eastern Bible being the real one. Oh how I would love to get one. I do hope one will soon be translated in English. Here is something from Sears book, I am quoting. "Besides the various readings called 'Keri and Cetib' which the Jews admit to be the oldest, there are two other kinds of various readings which deserve our notice because they are given in some printed Bibles. The first are that of the Eastern and Western Jews, the second, those between the manuscripts of 'Ben Asher and Ben

Naphtali.' By the Eastern Jews we are to understand those of Babylon. By the Western those of Palestine. Ben Asher, at Tiberius and Ben Naphtali, at Babylon, who were two famous Masorites, that lived about the year 1030, and were the last of them." I hope you can make something out of this. If I find something real concrete I will send it to you. Thank you so much for the Shekinah. I am so impressed with the truth and keep up the good work in the truth of the Trinity and more women in the ministry. God bless you.

Aurora Packer  
Carmichael, California

You send me your publications. I get so many that I don't have time to read them all, and I haven't read much of yours but this last time I noticed your chapters of the Aramaic language. I used to have a N.T. supposed to be translated directly from Aramaic and I loved it but I can't find it anymore. I believe I loaned it out and forgot where. I believe it exposes some errors in the King James. I came out of the horse and buggy Amish church and they shun their dispelled former members. They take the text in Cor. which says 'with such a one you shall not eat' to mean an ordinary meal. (See Letters, page 14)

## Letters

while the Aramaic says 'break bread.' I'd like to have another translation again. Do you have them to sell? I want to show my people that in conjunction with your articles in your paper concerning the Aramaic. In the past I couldn't get anywhere trying to teach my people truth but I think the time is ripe for a change. A few are showing interest. Do you have George Lamsa's articles printed separate? I'd like some to give away to friends who I believe would appreciate them.

Eli Stoltzfus  
Honeybrook, Pennsylvania

Received your two publications, issues June & Aug. 1981. I have just read enough to see you are searching for truth. As to the Hebrew word 'Elohim,' you are mistaken in its meaning. It is not a name, but is used as a title for our Heavenly Father, and is also used as a title for judge, other men, angels etc. Our heavenly Father only has one proper name. It is Yahowah. It appears only once in the K.J. Bible. Psalm 68:4 has the short form 'Jah' pronounced 'Yah' as in HalleluJah or AlleluJa. It has been mistakenly rendered 'Jehovah.' Yahowah made Adam and Eve a single dual person like himself. Then he divided them, but they must come back together again in order to reproduce or generate like himself. I'll send you some literature I have written that explains these things more thoroughly. The Hebrew words 'Elohim,' 'El,' and 'Eloah,' are words with very broad meanings and are rendered into around 50 English words in the K.J. Bible, like large, great, mighty, etc.

Earl W. Boyd  
Rockwall, Texas

Daily Mail, Friday, November 13, 1981

## Now women become deacons

THE Church of England's General Synod yesterday voted to let women as well as men be deacons.

They will be called the Rev. and be able to take marriage services as well as burials. But they will not be able to become priests.



# Baptist MESSAGE

Volume 97

June 17, 1982

Number 24

## Anders urges Baptists to open doors for women

By Jerilynn Armstrong

NEW ORLEANS, — Concluding that Jesus Christ would have been "an Equal Opportunity Employer," Professor Sarah Frances Anders Sunday night told of the meager achievements for women in areas of position and place in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Anders, chairperson of the sociology department of Louisiana College in Pineville, presented a paper on the status of Southern Baptist women in 1975 gave an update Sunday night during a dinner for 200 women in ministry sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union, 1.1 million member auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Anders stated that even in the secular fields of politics, law, medicine and higher education, no real revolution has been occurring.

Instead, "only an increased awareness of inequities and some scattered revolutionary changes occurred. Women in ministry need not look to secular areas for bold role models but set our own," she said.

Looking to Southern Baptists, Anders reported that there have been few if any significant increases among the ordination and ministry opportunities of women in recent years.

Other denominations continue to be more open to women in the pastorate than Southern Baptists are, she continued.

American Baptists, Lutherans, and Presbyterians all have more than one — half of their ordained women serving in congregations where Southern Baptists have less than one dozen, Anders said.

The proposal was supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Robert Runcle.

The Bishop of Norwich, the Rt. Rev. Maurice Wood, separated the issues of

Looking beyond the ordained church staff positions, Anders said, Southern Baptists are also far behind other Protestant denominations in the positions given to women on local governing bodies.

Even though Southern Baptists have local churches in every state that have opened this ministry to women, my estimate places the number of women deacons across our convention somewhere between the 154 Episcopal women and 489 Methodist women who have been so ordained," she said.

Some areas of hope pinpointed by Anders included ministry on college campuses and home and foreign missions. Women comprise 42 percent of the home mission staff in the field and 54 percent of all career appointments at the Foreign Mission Board.

"In recent travels to Foreign Mission fields it was apparent to me that effectiveness in foreign lands was not predetermined by gender, age or marital status."

In addition to providing statistics, Anders shared that women serving in ministry positions in local churches, agencies and institutions seem to be crying out for a support system among their peers.

"It is often a lonely task filled with stress, illness and burnout similar to the experiences of men. A support network would provide us not only with current information but serve as a strengthening tool among us," Anders said.

Following Anders' speech the women voted to form a support network of women in ministry sponsored by WMU.

women deacons and women priests. There were 'fears by some that if we agreed this then we are doing something towards the debate for women priests,' he said.

## Part 4

*Melchisedec Manuscripts*

by Norene Nicholls

Again we look into the 91st Psalm, but this time the 9th verse where we see once more a further enlightenment concerning the MOST HIGH, EL-ELYON. Be reminded that the Order of Melchisedec is closely allied with the MOST HIGH, for those of this calling are priests of the Most High, the El-Elyon. So to understand their position and ordination we have to understand something concerning EL-ELYON.

"Because thou hast made the LORD (Yahweh), which is my refuge, even the MOST HIGH, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Not only did we quote the 9th verse but the following three verses, for they all pertain to the same thing and are a part of the whole. In the prior lesson we considered the secret place of the MOST HIGH, now we consider making the MOST HIGH our HABITATION.

The word MADE means literally to PUT which carries the thought of placing something. It is a word of action not passivity. Therefore the thought is of actively placing or making the MOST HIGH our habitation, not of waiting for Him to sovereignly place us in the habitation. This points up the fact that we have a part to play in this which is making the choice that the MOST HIGH will be our dwelling place.

Then we come to the word HABITATION which is an interesting word, for it comes from the root which means COHABITATION or DUTY OF MARRIAGE. From this then comes the thought of a home which is based upon the union of two people. Therefore it is plain to be seen that the MOST HIGH is not just to be a refuge or hiding place, but He is to be a HABITATION where a perfect union takes place, where lives are blended one into another, where love rules, where cohabiting is a reality. This is where each belongs to the other, where the interest of the other is predominant, where total blending takes place. Now connecting this with the Order of Melchisedec, it is to be recognized that the Most High blends with this priesthood, and this priesthood blends with the

Most High. There is such a union, such a oneness, such a completeness that there flows forth the life of the Most High through all those of this priesthood calling. The nearest way to describe this union is by what little we know of true marriage which is a totality of union.

This condition then accounts for what follows: no evil shall befall you, no plague shall come nigh thy dwelling, His angels have charge over you, they uphold you lest you fall. We glowingly repeat these words because they are so wonderful, but the condition that precedes it is what makes it a reality — by making the MOST HIGH our HABITATION!

Now let us leave the Psalms and what they have to say about the MOST HIGH and proceed to Isaiah 14. Verses 12 through 17 give us a picture of the fall of Lucifer, and in this description we see the thoughts and intents of his heart as he says, "I will ASCEND into heaven, I will EXALT my throne above the stars of God (EL), I will SIT upon the mount of the congregation, I will ASCEND above the heights of the clouds, I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH." We cannot go into detail on all the things that Lucifer said that he would do by the power of his own will, but let us briefly touch on them. He was determined to ascend into heaven though he had been cast out into the atmosphere and the earth. He was after POSITION. He then spoke of his throne, and he is the god of this world which indicates he does have a throne, but he wanted to exalt it above the stars of God (EL) which refers to the "star seed," the sons of Israel and the morning stars (daughters). He wanted full rule over them. He was jealous to sit upon the mount of the congregation, not just among but upon, and he surely is still trying to sit upon the congregation but mostly upon the mount or height of the congregation. He desired to be above the heights of the clouds, which refers to people, such as, a great cloud of witnesses. He wanted the position above them. But lastly and most significant of all, he said, "I will be LIKE the MOST HIGH!" Why did he not want to be LIKE YAHWEH, like YASHUAH, like ELOHIM, like EL-SHADDAI, etc.? His flat statement was that he would be like the MOST HIGH. There was no fuller manifestation than the MOST HIGH, and this he wanted.

Yet he did not say he would be the MOST HIGH but only LIKE the MOST HIGH. He wanted to resemble or be similar to the MOST HIGH.

The MOST HIGH was before there was any other manifestation of Himself. This was when HE was ALL in ONE. Everything was in Him. He was everything. But out of Himself He began to issue forth into various manifestations, and as He did so there came forth the various revelations of His various facets of being. He could not be satisfied with ONENESS alone in Himself when He had all the ability to be ALL IN ALL, not just ALL IN ONE. Lucifer recognized the greatness of the position of the MOST HIGH and therefore jealously desired to be LIKE the MOST HIGH. Lucifer, son of the morning, wanted to gather everything into Himself rather than multiply out of himself. Selfishness gathers everything into itself whereas love multiplies out of itself. Lucifer would have taken everything, condensed it back into his selfish oneness, for he did not have the nature of the MOST HIGH to desire to multiply in blessings out of himself. Can you begin to see now why he said, "I will be LIKE the MOST HIGH?"

He perpetrated the same twisted truth on Adam and Eve when he told Eve that, if she partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that they would be AS gods. Why did they need to be AS gods when they were already gods? Is it not written, "Ye are gods unto whom the word of the Lord came?" The word GODS in the Hebrew is ELOHIM, which is plural and refers to the family of God or the ELOHIM. Yes, we were gods (Elohim), but we fell like one of the princes (Lucifer), but our Father's great redemption has taken all of this into consideration, and we are now being brought back into the knowledge of who we really are, not who we want to be like.

Furthermore, the MOST HIGH rules over all and divides the nations and peoples of the earth into their respective places in the earth. Lucifer still wants to be LIKE the MOST HIGH, and instead of dividing to the peoples and nations their respective places, he is trying to bring about a oneness and conglomeration all under his authority. How perverted this whole thinking of Lucifer is! And, as the Melchisedec Priesthood comes into prominence, the whole kingdom of Lucifer will be shaken to the foundations with every man returning to his own land, his own people, and his own race. Again

the law of Yahweh shall be enforced that "Everything shall bring forth after its own kind." Every race should be proud enough of its particular heritage to not want to mix and mingle and turn people into mongrels. I do not say that with any derogatory thought against anyone, but the mongrelization of the races is Lucifer's attempt at being LIKE the MOST HIGH and bringing everything into oneness - his oneness which is selfishness to the extreme.

This wanting to be LIKE the MOST HIGH has directed Lucifer into the propagation of all kinds of perversion. The MOST HIGH was not divided into masculine nor feminine to begin with, but out of the MOST HIGH came the manifestations of Father and Mother, sonship and daughterhood. What is Lucifer doing? He still wants to be LIKE the MOST HIGH and conglomerate the sexes. He says they are one. This leads into homosexuality of all forms and kinds, and what a tragedy that men are enacting into law the sanction of such things! This is all a part of Lucifer attempting to be LIKE the MOST HIGH. Saints, wake up and learn to discern both good and evil, for this discernment must come along with the Order of Melchisedec. This truth of Melchisedec will put everything into its proper place, dispense with the false oneness that is growing by leaps and bounds in the earth, and uncover the decrepit falsehood and twisted truth that pervades everywhere.

Let me dissuade you from wanting to be LIKE God or LIKE Jesus, as the song says, for we are not to be LIKE we are to BE. We are to know by the revelation of the Spirit who we really ARE, and then we will not be taken in by the Luciferian half truth of wanting to be LIKE God. We are the Elohim who have been lowered into this earthly state that we might learn to discern fully and know who we are. The blood of the everlasting covenant being applied to our minds and hearts will cleanse them from blindness and inaccuracies as well as from sin, which means missing the mark, until with unfeigned desire we shall return to the reality of our existence coming out of HIM. We are to be His Manifestation in the earth, we are to be the PRIESTS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD dividing to the nations their inheritance, revealing the mysteries of the Godhead, opening the way of life, giving of the water of life to those that thirst, and manifesting pristine truth that delivers and sets free!

Musings from

# ROCINANTE

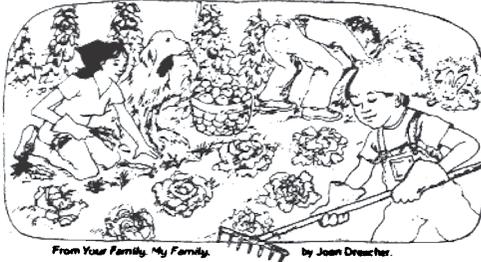


February, 1982

Quixote Center Newsletter

## "MALE AND FEMALE-GOD CREATED THEM"

(Editor's Note: The following is a pastoral letter issued on October 24, 1981 by Bp. Victor Balke of Crookston, MN and Bp. Raymond Lucker of New Ulm, MN. They described this as a work of justice on behalf of women in the church. The document was heavily footnoted, but we are not including the footnotes in our reprint. They can be found in the 11/5/81 issue of ORIGINS. We encourage you to read this document and to reflect on the challenging questions posed at the end in order to recommit ourselves to the cause of equality in the church and society.)



From Your Family, My Family. by Joan Dreacher.

On April 18, 1975, Pope Paul VI addressed the Committee for the International Women's Year proclaimed by the United Nations for 1975. After noting that he had already pointed out "how very much in agreement the church was with the purposes of the International Women's Year," he noted that one of the aims of the year, though not the only one, was "winning equal rights for women." And in remarking on how much needs to be done to promote the rights of women, he said, "Need we say that there are still millions of women who do not enjoy basic rights or receive elementary consideration?"

Moreover, he stated that "the most pressing need at the moment... is the immense task of awakening women and advancing their cause at the grass-roots level, both in civil society and in the church." And he added:

"This is the task we strongly emphasized in our address to the Italian jurists last Dec. 7: to endeavor everywhere to bring about the discovery of, respect for and protection of the rights and prerogatives of every woman, single or married, in education, in the professions, and in civil, social and religious life."

He noted, too, that "the whole church (not just the Holy See) is also involved in this task, for it is at the level of the local communities that there must be an examination of conscience."

"The examination has to do with the manner in which the rights and duties of both men and women are respected and fostered and also with the participation of women in the life of society, on the one hand, and in the life and mission of the church, on the other."

All this, of course, reflects what was solemnly stated by the Second Vatican Council in its Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World in 1965:

"It is, therefore, one of the duties most appropriate to our time, above all for Christians, to work untiringly for fundamental decisions to be taken in economic and political affairs, on the national as well as the international level, which will ensure the recognition and implementation everywhere of the right of every (person) to human and civil culture in harmony with the dignity of the human person, without distinction of race, sex, nation, religion or social circumstances."

In view of the special problems relating to the status of women in our day, this pastoral is written to the women and men of the church of Crookston in the hope that it will raise to a new level of awareness the issue of Christian feminism and the sin of sexism. It is written also in the hope that it will lead to a greater and fully just participation on the part of women in the life of the church.

### FEMINISM AND SEXISM

The Second Vatican Council spoke of "the birth of a new humanism":

"In each nation and social group there is a growing number of men and women who are conscious that they themselves are craftsmen and molders of their community's culture... We are witnessing, then, the birth of a new humanism, where man is defined before all else by his responsibility to his brothers (and sisters) and at the court of history."

Christian humanism may be described, therefore, as a commitment in the light of the Gospel to the full humanity of all persons and to their consequent dignity and equality as persons, so that changes in structures, customs, institutions and relationships will occur for the good of all.

When, in the application of this description, our primary emphasis is on women, as in this pastoral, then we are speaking more specifically of Christian feminism. But it must be remembered that one's dignity and basic equality with others comes not from one's femininity or masculinity, but from one's humanity. For it is our common, shared humanity which is ultimately the foundation for the dignity and equality of us all as persons and which is at the very heart of the new humanism spoken of by the Second Vatican Council.

Sexism, directly opposed to Christian humanism and feminism, is the erroneous belief or conviction or attitude that one sex, female or male, is superior to the other in the very order of creation or by the very nature of things. When anyone believes that men are inherently superior to women or that women are inherently superior to men, then he or she is guilty of sexism. Sexism is a moral and social evil. It is not the truth of the biological, sociological or psychological sciences, nor is it the truth of the Gospel. Sexism is a lie. It is a grievous sin, diminished in its gravity only by indeliberate ignorance or by pathological fear.

Though there are many contexts in which sexism is an unfortunate reality, one context that deserves special mention is marriage. How contrary this is to the Christian understanding of marriage! For the married state, wherein a man and a woman "are no longer two, but one flesh," is an "intimate partnership of life" characterized by a love that "leads the partners to a free and mutual giving of self, experienced in tenderness and action, and permeates their whole lives." It is easy to see, then, that sexism in marriage is directly opposed to the very meaning of married life, and any expression of headship in marriage must take this into account.

The kind of sexism that denigrates women, our main concern here, results in a non-rational stereotyping of both women and men, and it is therefore harmful to both. "If women are thought inferior, passive, non-intelligent by a society, men are conditioned to feel superior, aggressive and intelligent. By polarizing the sexes, each is limited to a 'proper' sphere." For women, the psychological costs of sexism are indeed extremely high.

There is, first of all, the tendency toward psychological paralysis, disabling them from asserting their self-worth. There is also the phenomenon of "feminine anti-feminism" by which some women view as threats those others who wish to enter into fields generally occupied by men. In addition, emotional dependency and false humility are often the prices of sexism for women.

For men, the costs of sexism are also high. They are victimized by hyper-rationalism, by an underdeveloped affective life, by the need to dominate and control. This means they value talking over listening, competition and conflict over measured growth, pride over humility, decisiveness over thoughtfulness, and an aggressive approach over a persuasive one. And from what has just been said, the tendency toward male violence, both physical and psychological, is evident.

#### CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP WITH WOMEN

It is clear therefore that sexism, like every other serious moral evil, has its negative effects both on individual persons and on society. The only adequate response to this evil is Christian feminism, described earlier as an attitude of mind and heart. And just as in all things else in Christian life and faith our model is Jesus Christ, so also here, in the matter of Christian feminism, he is our model.



Before examining Christ's attitudes toward women, however, we ought to say something of the status of women in Palestine at the time of Christ. We need not describe their situation in great detail, though that would indeed emphasize how counter Jesus went to the culture of his time. Suffice it here to say that they had a very inferior status - a status based on the assumption that they were inferior as persons. "Praised be God that he has not created me a woman" was part of the daily prayer of male Jews.

Women were therefore seriously restricted in public life and prayer. They were limited to one outer part of the temple, and they were not permitted to read publicly or to assume any leading role in the Jewish liturgy. Women were ordinarily not to be spoken to in public, nor could they testify in a court of law. They could be easily divorced, but they were not allowed to divorce their husbands. Some Jewish leaders believed that women should not leave their homes except to go to the synagogue or the temple. In fact, for the most part their role was to bear and rear children.

From birth on, a female person had to live with attitudes that surely indicated she was considered as inherently inferior. For, according to a rabbinic saying, "At the birth of a boy all are joyful, but at the birth of a girl all are sad...When a boy comes into the world, peace comes into the world; when a girl comes, nothing comes."

Much more could be said about the negative understanding and the low status of women in Palestine at the time of Christ, but the little said here indicates how bleak their situation was. Jesus' own relationships with women provide a striking contrast to this dark picture.

To begin with, when Jesus addressed the question of divorce, he referred to the passage of Genesis where it is stated: "God created man in his own image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them."

The word "man" is clearly generic here. It means "woman" as well as man, and the meaning is that God created human beings, both female and male, in his image, the divine image. Only in this understanding does the word "them" of "male and female he created them" make sense. Moreover, it is clear that the creation story makes no distinction between women and men as persons because it immediately continues by saying: "God blessed them (both male and female), saying: 'Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of

the sea, the birds of the air and all living things that move on the earth.' Dominion belongs to women and men alike and equally."

Jesus' relationships with women indicate that he embraced this notion that women are full human persons created in the image of God, equal with men and having no less dignity than men. Indeed, his relationships with women, meaningful in themselves for them and for him, may be characterized as prophetic, i.e., as having a teaching value for his contemporaries and for us.

St. Luke gives this summary of Jesus in ministry, and we cannot fail to note his association with women:

"After this he journeyed through towns and villages preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve accompanied him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and maladies: Mary called the Magdalene, from whom seven devils had gone out, Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Susanna and many others who were assisting them out of their means."

In view of the expected public relationships between women and men in the Palestine of Jesus, this is a remarkable passage. Not only do women accompany him as followers, but many of them support his ministry out of their means. This represents an entirely new understanding of the role of woman. And even as it affirms them as human persons, it shows how authentically free Jesus was in this association with them.



Another remarkable passage, also in Luke, describes how Jesus, a guest in the home of Martha, took the time to teach her sister Mary. "She had a sister named Mary, who seated herself at the Lord's feet and listened to his words." When Martha complained to Jesus about Mary doing nothing, Jesus said, "Mary has chosen the better portion, and she shall not be deprived of it." This may seem to be of little significance, but Eliezer, a first century rabbi had taught: "Rather should the words of the Torah be burned than entrusted to a woman." Jesus' teaching of Mary was a radical departure from accepted practices toward women; he is inviting her and all women in the fullness of their personhood to share in the mysteries and in the knowledge of the reign of God.

Still more striking in St. John's Gospel is the description of the meeting and the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. Not only does he speak with her, thus breaking one of the "rules" denigrating women (much to the surprise of the disciples), but he reveals himself to her as the Messiah: "I who speak to you am he." Jesus goes far beyond entrusting the words of the Torah to her; he entrusts himself to her as the expected anointed one of God. In Jesus' eyes, women too are worthy to be called to the truth by which they will be saved.



Women were also the loved recipients of many of Jesus' mercies and miracles. Without even being asked for a favor by the widow of Naim, whose only son had died, Jesus "was moved with pity upon seeing her and said to her, 'Do not cry,' and then he raised the boy to life. He raised the daughter of Jairus to life, and Lazarus was resurrected in response to the grief of Mary and Martha. He permitted a woman, known to be a sinner, to perfume his feet with oil after she had wept over them and dried them with her hair. He healed the man born blind, and he freed another of her infirmity of 18 years, violating - at least in the eyes of some - the sacredness of the Sabbath.

And in one of the most touching scenes in the Gospels, Jesus saves the life of the woman taken in adultery. Those who brought her to Jesus treated her as a mere object for their own selfish purposes; they wanted to use her to make it appear that Jesus was either opposing

the Mosaic law or was not the man of mercy he appeared to be. But Jesus outwitted them. Reminding them of their own sinfulness, he shamed them into dropping their stones, for he saw standing before him not so much a sinner, but a human person, an image of God deserving compassion, both human and divine.

But there is still more. In the Gospel of Luke, the resurrection is announced first to women. And from what the angel told the women, we know that Jesus had shared with them his most intimate teachings: "Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee—that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." "With this reminder," we read, "his word came back to them."

In St. John's Gospel, the first person to encounter the risen Lord directly is Mary Magdalene, and she is the first to be sent as a witness to the resurrection: "Go to my brothers," Jesus said, "and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God.'" In Matthew and Mark as well, the first revelation of the resurrection is made to women. Revealing first to them and not to men that he had truly risen, and asking them who could not be legal witnesses to give witness to his resurrection, the central truth of our faith—what greater way for Christ to assert the full humanness and dignity of women and their equality with men, not only as persons but as witnesses.

In all these instances, both before and after the resurrection, Jesus related to women as full human persons. Notwithstanding the negative, contemporary attitudes toward women—attitudes that Jesus dared not to share, dared even to contradict—and notwithstanding the law of Moses as interpreted in his time, Jesus acknowledged the dignity of women and their equality with men in the sight of God in whose image he knew they were created. In a very powerful and prophetic way, Jesus was urging changes in the customs and structures of his time and in the norms governing relationships with women—changes that would benefit not women only, but men as well.

We note, too, as we contemplate the ministry of Jesus, that he related to women with a marvelous inner freedom. Not only did he, the Lord of the Sabbath and the Lord of the law, act with freedom in the context of both the Sabbath and the law, but he was free of all inner fears that might have prevented him from recognizing the full humanity and personhood of women. He therefore neither demeaned them or divinized them—two extreme and inhuman ways of relating to women (ways women have historically experienced), and consequently two ways of preventing them from being full participants, equal with men, in the human enterprise.

#### NEED FOR CHRIST'S SENSITIVITY

Again and again the Gospel portrays Jesus as a person of deep and intense prayer, and frequently he prayed to God as "Abba," i.e., as Father. With Jesus as our model, we as church and as the body of Christ have also consistently prayed to God as Father.

It must be noted, however, that there is no male or female in God, for our God transcends all such distinctions. The word "Father" by which we in imitation of Jesus pray to God is a metaphorical term, and in terms of metaphor God both mothers us and fathers us. Indeed, the scripture uses images of mother love as well as father love in describing God's compassionate and tender care for us. For example, God said to his people through Isaiah: "As a mother comforts her son, so will I comfort you." To ignore this metaphorical use of words, therefore, in a way that leads to an understanding of God as male and/or to an understanding of the male as superior to the female is as wrong as it is insensitive.

Moreover, to imply that the male is superior to the female because the historical Christ was male is also both insensitive and wrong, for through baptism we are all one in the risen Christ. St. Paul wrote to the Galatians: "There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus." Paul may well have been "a man not entirely free from a rabbinic view of the place of women," but he surely reflects here the teachings of Jesus in regard to the equal humanity and equal dignity among women and men as redeemed persons.

Because all are one in Christ, and because through Christ all are God's daughters and sons enjoying basic equality as persons, we ought to use "inclusive and unitive" language whenever it is feasible to do so in a communal setting, i.e., language that includes both women and men and emphasizes the unity of us all in Christ. For example, instead of praying, "O God, look with favor upon man who you have redeemed," we ought to pray, "O God, look

with favor upon us whom you have redeemed." Such inclusive and unitive language, whether or not in the context of prayer, reflects the sensitivity of Christ toward women, and it fulfills the right expectations not only of women but of many men as well. Hence, we must hope that inclusive language, always acceptable—even preferable—outside the liturgy, will soon be approved for all liturgical settings as well.

#### AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

"The tradition suggests that women were major participants in the life of the primitive community" but "by the time the Gospels were finally written down, much of the early community's liberalism regarding women had already eroded." I do not intend in this pastoral to outline the history of this erosion over the course of time, though that would be a profitable and enlightening study, explaining the hurt and anger of many women today. My primary interest at this point is not to deplore the past, but to exhort and encourage our local church and its parishes to reflect today and tomorrow the attitudes of Jesus, our supreme model, in their relationships with women in the church.

Since Pope Paul VI said in regard to this entire matter, as already noted, that "it is at the level of the local communities that there must be an examination of conscience," I have chosen to provide such an examination. The first questions below have to do with our attitudes toward women, and the implication behind the questions on pastoral practices is that women have a baptismal right in justice to involvement, equal with that of men, in the positions and offices mentioned. All these questions, of course, are intended both for men and women.

In regard to my attitudes toward women:

1. Do I ever make disparaging remarks about women or react approvingly when such remarks are made?
2. Do I stereotype women in any way or approve—even by silence—of statements that do stereotype them?
3. Do I pray to God or speak of God as maternal as well as paternal, or does it bother me when others do so in non-liturgical prayer?
4. Do I openly affirm and even defend, when appropriate, the full humanness of women, their dignity and their equality as persons with men?
5. Am I committed to changes in structures and relationships that will "bring about the discovery of, respect for and protection of the rights and prerogatives of every woman, single or married, in education, in the professions and in civil, social and religious life"?
6. Do I ever read the Gospels intent on finding Jesus' attitude toward women, and do I proclaim and live what I find?
7. Am I satisfied or pleased with the present status of women in the church and in society?
8. Do I agree that sexism is a social and moral evil and that objectively it is a grave sin?
9. Do I believe that women are created in the divine image and have equal dominion with men over God's creation?
10. Do I believe that Jesus' attitudes and relationships with women were not only meaningful in themselves, but are normative and prophetic for us today?
11. Do I willingly listen to women when they speak about their status in the church and in society?
12. Do I think this pastoral was necessary or beneficial for our time and place?

In regard to pastoral practices relative to women:

1. Does my parish have more than a token number of women on the parish council and its various committees?
2. Does my parish have more than a token number of women on the school board and/or on the board of religious education?
3. Does my parish have more than a token number of women involved in the liturgical ministries (readers, singers and musicians, distributors of holy communion, leaders of song, ushers, parish visitors)?
4. Does my parish have women as trustees?
5. Do my diocese and/or parish and school pay a just salary to their full-time or part-time female employees, a salary equal to that of male employees in similar positions?
6. Do my parish and school include instruction on Christian feminism or on sexism in their religious education and formation programs on all levels?
7. Does my diocese have more than a token number of women on the diocesan pastoral council and on the various diocesan boards and committees?
8. Does my diocese and/or parish have more than a token number of women in leadership positions, e.g., as heads of diocesan or parish offices?
9. Does my diocese and/or parish recognize in

concrete ways the contributions made by women to the life and faith of the diocese and parish?

10. Does my diocese and/or parish concretely affirm, encourage and even assist the involvement of women "in the life of society, on the one hand, and in the life and mission of the church, on the other"?

11. Does my diocese and/or parish provide a known and approachable forum for women to speak on issues especially relevant to them?

12. Does my diocese and/or parish attempt to use inclusive language in its publications and communications and in the liturgy where possible?

The purpose of this examination of conscience is to raise our consciousness on issues related to Christian feminism, not to create guilt feelings. I offer it as an aid to determine our attitudes and practices in the church toward women, and as a checklist for moving toward a more thorough acceptance of women into the life of the local church both on the diocesan and the parish levels.

### CONCLUSION

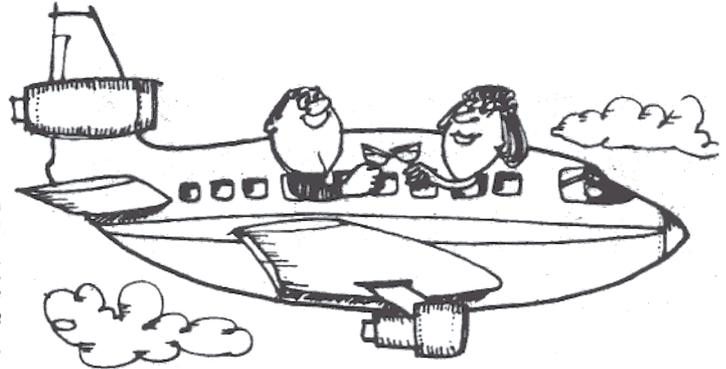
Whether or not we realize it, many women and men in the church are disappointed, frustrated and even angered by the hesitancy or the refusal of some leaders within the church to acknowledge the just and rightful place of women in the life and mission of the church. This reaction—prescinding from the statement of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, approved by Pope Paul VI, declaring why the church "does not consider herself authorized to admit women to priestly ordination"—results sometimes in women and men withdrawing from ministry in the church and even, though more rarely, in total alienation from the church.

In the name of Christ then, and for the sake of women in the church, as well as for the sake of the church itself, I beg that an examination—and, if needed, a correction—of our attitudes and practices regarding women be given high priority in our hearts and lives. This may not always be an easy task, but is a necessary one if we want to act not only in obedience to the prophetic example of Christ but also in justice to women.

And this is a matter of justice to women, for

"through baptism and confirmation all (women as well as men) are appointed...by the Lord himself" in the saving mission of the church. Flowing from this divine appointment, which we dare not undo, are rights and duties for women in the church which we may not deny to them—any more than to men—without violating the will of Christ and doing serious injury to women and to the whole church and its mission. That indeed would be a serious burden on our individual consciences and on the consciences of our diocesan and parish communities of faith.

Let us therefore proceed without delay with this work of justice on behalf of women in the church. With faith and hope in Christ, through whom "the whole body grows and—with the proper functioning of the members joined firmly together by each supporting ligament—builds itself up in love," let us all commit ourselves to those changes in ourselves, in our structures and relationships which will be for the good of all and for the good of the church. In that way we as church will be a more perfect sign of Christ and a more faithful servant of the reign of God, a reign of justice, love and peace.



THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Saturday, May 15, 1982

# It is written

## Priest's books outline novel view of U.S. Catholicism



Special for The Republic  
Carol Romano

By Richard Lessner  
Republic Religion Writer

**TUCSON** — In his fourth-floor office at the University of Arizona, the Rev. Andrew Greeley brewed tea in two plastic mugs bearing the name "Andy." He turned on his Irish charm and lapsed into a brogue.

"Sure, himself is naught but a charmin' leprechaun," he said, chuckling, as he stirred the tea.

Greeley usually is not thought of as a leprechaun. The mention of his name elicits a variety of responses, none of them mild. In the offices of the Diocese of Phoenix the response is often rolled eyes and expressions of, "Oh, my God!" and, "Please, not



The Rev. Andrew Greeley, a storyteller who stirs up resentment and controversy.

Greeley. Anyone but Greeley.”

Other clergymen and diocese officials wink, and taking you aside, admit that they admire Greeley, his success, courage, and outspokenness.

Greeley is a second-generation Irish-American. His grandparents emigrated from County Mayo in the 1870s. He and his two younger sisters grew up in Chicago, where he became a priest and worked in a parish for 10 years. After completing his doctoral degree at the University of Chicago in 1965, he joined the faculty of the University of Chicago and began his writing career. He joined the UofA faculty in 1979.

### Prodigious worker

Greeley is working on a series of four novels. *The Cardinal Sins* and *Thy Brother's Wife* will be followed by *Descent Into Hell* and *Lord of the Dance*.

“The first was about a man who wouldn't leave the priesthood. The second is about a man tempted to leave it but doesn't. The third is about a man who does leave the priesthood, and the fourth will have a woman as the protagonist,” Greeley said.

Greeley's reputation as a sociologist of religion was firmly rooted long before *The Cardinal Sins* was published. He has written or contributed to more than 80 scholarly books.

His works on ethnicity and the Catholic Church in America are standards in the field. One receives the impression that Greeley wishes his novels were taken as seriously as his scholarly works.

Greeley's capacity for work is prodigious. In 1981 he published four books, two of them serious sociological studies. In 1982 (an “off year”) he will publish two books.

“The themes in the novels are themes that interest me,” he said. “Growing up, the development of the Irish in America, changes in the church over the last 40 years — this is what interests me.”

### God as woman

God as woman is a theme that has recently seized Greeley and he plans to explore it in *Lord of the Dance*.

“God as woman — now that's a good idea. Our research shows that 25 percent of those under 30 have thought of God as a woman. This is an idea whose time has come,” Greeley said. “This will show up in art and literature and will offend some and fascinate others.”

Greeley explained that in Catholic theology Mary reflects the femininity of God, but that Catholics need an awareness of the feminine aspect of God's nature.

Greeley thinks the Catholic Church is healthier at the grass-roots level in the United States than it is anywhere else in the world. He believes the liberal spirit of Vatican II is still alive and well in the church and that conservative trends are feeble.

He said he does not consider John Paul II to be a reactionary or even very conservative.

The church is exceptionally vital at the parish level, said Greeley, but at the institutional level, at the level of the hierarchy, it is simply ignored by the mass of the laity.

Greeley is optimistic about the future of the American church, but he sees one cloud on the horizon — the shortage of priests. But since the church has survived so well the trauma of the last two decades — the changes of Vatican II and the birth-control debate — he looks toward the future with hope.

April 20, 1982 The Lariat Page 9

# 'All fields have ministry'

## Women's roles vex student

By the time most people enter their 30s they have settled into a career. Rosalie Beck, however, has spent most of her 33 years trying to find a direction and traveled half-way around the world to do it.

Miss Beck began her journey at the University of California at San Diego and ended it at Baylor University.

Becker is a teaching assistant (teaching Old Testament), while working on her doctoral degree in

church history.

As a journeyman missionary in Vietnam, Miss Beck was evacuated in 1975 because of the communist takeover. She said it was during her time in Vietnam that she was called to a “professional ministry.”

While in Vietnam, Miss Beck was stationed in Dalat, where she taught at the University of Dalat. “There were so many needs to be met that anybody who could help would feel fulfilled,” she said.

“When I left Vietnam, I had intended to go to seminary and then back to do youth work. But that door was shut rapidly in 1975 and has not opened since,” Miss Beck explained.

She said her stay in Vietnam was the turning point on the road to discover her call, and her life prior to this “needed direction.”

Miss Beck graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in biochem-  
(Continued bottom of page 24)

## EXCERPTS FROM

# The Discovery of Genesis



## How the Truths of Genesis Were Found Hidden in the Chinese Language

C.H. Kang and Ethel R. Nelson

### Chapter 5: They Shall Be One Flesh

How could the creation of the woman be even more spectacular than that of the man! The Biblical story relates that at first Adam was pleasantly occupied naming all the beasts, cattle, and birds which God had created, and in doing so doubtlessly noticed that all the animals were in pairs, male and female. He realized that he himself had no mate with whom to communicate and share his joys of discovery. "The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:20).

It was now late in the afternoon of this first eventful sixth day, as the sun was beginning to slip down into the western sky. The word *west* 西 pictures Adam, the *first-man* 儿, in the Garden of Eden, an *enclosure* 口, still alone.

一 + 儿 + 口 = 西  
one man enclosure west

Using this radical *west*, together with the primitive for *woman* 女, a new character is formed 要, meaning *to want, important, necessary, to desire, a must*. How true this was for Adam who felt lonely and *wanted* a "helper fit for him." A fitting mate was not only *important*, but a *necessity*! This character tells not only *what*

was important and necessary for the first man (a woman) but also *when* he began to feel his need (late in the day).

一 儿 + 口 = 西 + 女 = 要<sup>1</sup>  
first man enclosure west woman necessity

When Adam felt his need of companionship, God was ready to satisfy it. "So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh" (Genesis 2:2<sup>1</sup>).

The Chinese character for *flesh* 肉 is like a moving picture of this very operation. It consists of a *border* 冂, which could pictographically represent a surgical incision, or "flap," to be repositioned at the conclusion of the procedure. The radical *to enter or go inside* 入 appears to be halfway entering through the incision, as if God's hand were going inside Adam's chest in order to remove the woman, here pictured as another *person* 人.

The Genesis record continues: "And the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and *flesh of my flesh*; she shall be called *Woman*, because *she was taken out of Man*'" (Genesis 2:22, 23). The *person* 人 that was taken

out of Adam, molded from his rib, was Eve. How happy he was that she was actually his flesh, a part of him!

冂 + 入 + 人 = 肉  
border to enter man flesh  
(person)

Even today the Chinese man refers to his wife as "my inside man." One character sometimes used for wife is 肉,<sup>2</sup> which also carries the more common meaning of *within, inside, or inner*, and is very similar to the larger character for flesh 肉. This combination of symbols for *flesh, wife* and *within, inside, inner*, seems more than coincidental when compared with the Biblical narrative of the creation of Eve, Adam's mate.

Thus Eve is depicted as originating in Adam. Paul in the New Testament also says this about the woman: "He [a man] is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. *For man was not made from woman, but woman from man*" (1 Corinthians 11:7, 8). Think of the uniqueness of this situation: a woman being formed from the body of a man. It happened only once!

We look to this first couple, Adam and Eve, as our common ancestors; "And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it'" (Genesis 1:28). The thought-provoking question might be asked: why did God not simultaneously create 10 couples, or 100, or 1,000, in order to populate the earth quickly? Why this time-consuming process with only two persons? Another alternative, God might have given the first man several wives for the same purpose. However, it was God's plan to create only one couple, male and female, for the beginning of the human family.

Of the several words in the Chinese language signifying the *beginning*, there are three characters that appear to correspond to the Genesis narrative and commemorate the most momentous *beginnings* in original history. The first of these memorializes the *beginning* of mankind, 元. It is composed of two familiar radicals: *two* 二 and *man* 儿, an adult. The beginning of the human family had just two individuals, also adults. The Chinese, who were often polygamous in practice, might have thought in terms of three, four, five, or ten persons (元, 兂, 𠄎, or 九) for the *beginning* of mankind. But they did not do this. The character 元 further confirms the Hebrew writings as recorded in the book of beginnings.

Adam had great *blessing and happiness* 福 with God's gift of his beautiful home in Eden (see page 44), but yet another dimension to his joy was added when he first led Eve to this idyllic abode among the flower-cov-

ered bowers. His life was now complete with a totally meaningful existence, and he was filled with *peace and tranquility* 安. This word representation shows a *roof* 宀 over a *woman* 女, implying that when the woman came under his *roof*, there was *peace* for both. They came and went together, knowing satisfaction and *tranquility* in each other's companionship.

Moreover, their home was a *palace* 宮, fit for the first lords of the earth, as they had been given this dominion by God. Again the *roof* 宀 is noted, with the first human *pair* 呂 as occupants. The closing scene in the drama of creation on the sixth day of this first memorable week was heralded with the institution of the marriage of Adam and Eve. The ceremony is beautifully depicted in three more primitive forms of this same character: 𠄎, 𠄏, and 𠄐, where 𠄎 and 𠄏 represent a *pair* 呂; 𠄐 is *flesh* 肉; and 𠄎, 𠄏, and 𠄐 are three "styles" of *roof*. This is an exact pictorial representation of Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man . . . cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh."

The beauty of the newly created earth is beyond our imagination, but by examining the radical, *gold* 金, we can begin to appreciate the lovely domain of Adam and Eve. The three horizontal lines again suggest the realms of heaven, sea, and earth given to the first representatives of *mankind* 人. The figure 王 means *king*. The two diagonal strokes projecting from the ground 土 remind us of the *light* 光 shining from their glorious bodies. Perhaps the ground reflected this light on scattered *golden nuggets*. There may have been other precious jewels as well, for God had created an exquisite paradise for them. "And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there"<sup>3</sup> (Genesis 2:12).

God at this point in time had finished His work of creation. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (Genesis 2:1). One word for *finish or complete* is 完. Again the key for *roof or house* 宀 is seen, together with 元 *beginning or first*. As previously dissected, 元 indicates two adult persons. With the foundation of this first home, therefore, the human family was begun, and the purpose of creation had been *completed*, and thus memorialized in the first marriage. Everything upon the earth had been formed for the ultimate joy and benefit of its human occupants.

二 + 儿 = 元 + 宀 = 完  
two person first home complete

It is significant also that this symbol 完 indicates a

finished creation rather than a continuous process which would have large numbers of humans gradually developing from lower forms of life.

It is conceivable that 元 might be interpreted as the beginning of mankind from two human beings, a male and female, without reference to the Biblical story. However, the character 完 makes no sense as completion or finish, outside of the Genesis interpretation, for how would having a home, roof 宀 be the completion of the beginning? "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. . . . On the sixth day God completed all the work He had been doing, and on the seventh day He ceased from all His work" (Genesis 1:27; 2:2 NEB).

It is noteworthy that various primitive verbs of action depict two persons, not one or several. The reason seems to be that in the beginning there were just two people to come and go. The verb to come 來<sup>2</sup> pictures two persons 人人 coming from behind a tree 木, which has been spread apart a little to accommodate their figures. Observe also the hook, possibly representing a foot, on the vertical stroke of to come 來 to indicate movement. The same two people are seen sitting 坐 on the ground 土.

The word for go is 往. The left radical 彳 could well

be an abbreviation for two persons, since 彳 is a second form of man 人. An additional stroke 彳 could indicate two men instead of "a step to the left," as usually interpreted. This is indeed borne out by the ancient writing which shows the upper stroke to be an abbreviated second smaller person 人. The second portion of the word, 主, means owner or lord. God had given to Adam and Eve "dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28). The horizontal strokes in three positions picture their dominion of heaven, sea, and earth; the small, slanted, mark (point) 丶 at the top indicates an "anointing and authorization." The two of them were the lords of the earth who went about in each other's company, 往.<sup>5</sup>

Wherever Adam went, his companion followed 從<sup>6</sup> as they went about their daily activities. Here one recognizes 彳 two persons repeated with 从. In order to clearly show the action of following, it would seem that the two persons 彳 must be repeated 从, one after another, otherwise 从 could be simply interpreted as two persons. The feet are represented by the radical 足, an abbreviation from foot 足. The person in 足 is substituted by two persons 从.

TO BE CONTINUED

(Continued from page 21)

istry from UCSD. She said she worked during college in a neurophysiology lab "basically washing up dishes more than anything else, but running experiments from time to time."

After graduation, she took a job in Houston for two years as a lab technician at the University of Texas Medical School. "I had centered on medical school ever since I was in junior high, and the doors just weren't open," she said. "In 1971, the role of women in medical schools was at a minimum."

Miss Beck attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to obtain a master of divinity degree, which is considered rare for a woman.

"At the seminary, I did run into opposition," Miss Beck said. "This is something that has been engen-

dered within me through my last few years of study on the graduate level. There are people — and women as well — who have a very fixed concept of the role of the woman in religious ministries."

Miss Beck said the opposition she received in seminary was from fellow students, not from any of the faculty or staff. "They would always point out Paul's admonition that women be silent, that women have no authority over men."

She said she would simply tell them that she "wanted to teach at a Baptist university, at the seminary level or possibly overseas."

After her many years of education, Miss Beck said she would like to emphasize to her students that any profession can have a spiritual base.

SHEKINAH

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