

THE "FEMININE GENIUS": A GIFT FROM THE HEART OF THE FATHER

THE ELEVATION OF THE DIGNITY AND MISSION OF WOMEN

BY THE PETRINE PRINCIPLE IN JOHN PAUL II

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*"...The Church sees in the face of women the reflection of a beauty which mirrors the loftiest sentiments of which the human heart is capable: the self-offering totality of love; the strength that is capable of bearing the greatest sorrows; limitless fidelity and tireless devotion to work; the ability to combine penetrating intuition with words of support and encouragement."*¹



Authentic femininity that bears the divine image has been wounded by the inheritance of Original Sin. While the effects of humanity's first parents on the feminine identity can already be seen in the Garden, the repercussions have reverberated through the centuries and have reached tragic levels in recent decades. While some historical forms of the degradation of women (male domination, being treated as objects of lust, and economic discrimination) persist, a new form of attack against the female identity has arisen from women themselves. Cleverly disguised as a movement to "free" women, these threats target the essence of the feminine heart—spousal love, maternity, and receptivity—and "in the name of 'freedom' and 'progress' militate against true values."² The movement to masculinize women has obscured the dignity of the feminine heart that was created in the image and likeness of God.

In the midst of this crisis of the feminine identity, the Spirit, in a beautiful movement of Providence, elevated to the papacy a heart which had been schooled in the Heart of the Immaculate. Rarely in the dynamic life of the Church has there been a Petrine heart in which the Marian and Petrine principles were so profoundly united than in the heart of Servant of God John Paul II. This unity gave him a particular gift for understanding and expressing the importance of the feminine, the Marian, in global society and in the Church. With his profound love of the person and mission of Mary, John Paul II understood well the beauty and mystery of femininity for in Mary herself the full dignity of womanhood can be found undefiled by the sin of Eve.

"Dignity is worthless if we have not knowledge....For if you possess something and do not know that you have got it, what glory is it?"³ John Paul II's personal acknowledgement of the dignity of the "feminine genius" helped him to understand that women today do not know the gift they have been given—they do not know their dignity as women. This understanding and appreciation for femininity that the world was lacking prompted him to use his teaching authority as Successor of Peter to elevate the world's understanding of the mission of the feminine genius. He worked to accomplish this by bringing society back to the truth of *authentic* femininity. He showed society that femininity is profoundly connected to the Heart of Mary and the Heart of the Church. He thus reminded the world that the dignity of women is of inestimable value to the mystery of Christ and His Church. It is precisely by resituating women and their feminine genius in the context of the Divine Plan that John Paul II reminded women of the particular gifts which the Lord has entrusted to them in order to assist in the building of the Kingdom.

There are primarily two feminine figures that John Paul II uses to reveal to women their mission and identity: Eve and the Blessed Virgin Mary. The life of Eve reveals to women their origin, the original designs of the Father for the feminine heart. Her creation, and even her sinful choice, demonstrates the receptivity gifted to women and how that gift can be misused. In a more complete way, the Blessed Virgin Mary, never tainted by sin, shows us the fruitfulness of that receptivity which is particular to the feminine. She, in particular, models the maternal dimension of woman and the many gifts that coincide and cooperate in motherhood. For through her fiat, the fiat of a *woman*, God "*begins a New Covenant with humanity.*"⁴ And there is yet a third feminine figure which John Paul II uses to reveal to women their femininity—the Church. While the Church has within it the Apostolic-Petrine Principle which is so central to the life of the Church, the Church herself is a Bride and Mother. Thus, in looking at the Church and the role she plays in the world, women can find a deeper meaning of their feminine identity. It is in closely examining these three figures and discovering the loving designs of the Father for them through Scripture and the Magisterium of John Paul II that woman, and

indeed all mankind, can rediscover the true identity and mission of the feminine genius.

Eve: The First Woman

The Scriptural texts surrounding God's creation of Eve contain such depth and meaning about the intentions, the designs, that the Father had for women when the first woman was given life. From the first chapter in Genesis one can find that "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them."⁵ Even here in the biblical text there is a specific reference to each gender, male and female, indicating that the two genders are distinct in vocation and mission while at the same time sharing the dignity of being created in God's image and likeness. This is such an important point for modern society which tries to eliminate the difference between men and women in order to make them "equal." In response to this movement, John Paul II writes that "women must not appropriate to themselves male characteristics contrary to their own feminine 'originality'. There is a well-founded fear that if they take this path, women will not 'reach fulfillment', but instead will *deform and lose what constitutes their essential richness*."⁶

In recognizing the distinct vocations of men and women, further insight into the nature of the gifts and mission of each can be gained by looking at the order in which the Lord created man and women in the second chapter of Genesis. The Lord created Adam before woman and gave him the living things of the earth to order, but "none proved to be the suitable partner for the man."⁷ Why were none of these creatures appropriate for man? Precisely because they could not receive love and respond to the initiation of the man. In this longing of Adam for Him. The woman, Eve, then images the receptive role of all humanity before God. She depicts humanity who is to openly embrace the free gift of God's love. Thus, though both man and woman are created in the image and likeness of God, the man images this particular aspect of initiating love. This differentiation is further expressed in *how* Eve was created.

Eve was created from the rib of Adam.⁸ The Lord formed her from Adam's own flesh, he *gave* and she *received*. This interchange is a profound illustration of the complementarity of the male and female vocations and initiates the continued dynamic of self-giving and receiving of the other that is realized when Eve is given to Adam as the "first donation."⁹ The receptivity of woman is further emphasized when she receives a name from Adam.¹⁰ Yet it is not long before the call to "exist mutually 'one for the other'"¹¹ meets an obstacle in the temptation of Eve by the serpent.

The serpent's temptation first targets Eve's trust and humility before the Lord, but in a particular way he attacks her feminine receptivity. Succumbing to temptation, Eve "took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband."¹² She *took* the fruit, placing her own desire and initiative over the commandment of God which she had *received*. Thus her sin of pride included an action against her femininity. This sin, shared with her by Adam, "brings about a break in the original unity which man enjoyed in the state of original justice: union with God as the source of the unity within his own 'I', in the mutual relationship between man and woman...as well as in regard to the external world, to nature."¹³ It is here that the lack of appreciation, and albeit confusion, about the "feminine genius" finds its origin.

As Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden as a necessary consequence for their disobedience, the Lord explains that what He had intended for man and for woman would become difficult as a result of sin. Upon a close examination of this passage, the reader gains more insight about the gifts woman had received from the Hand of God at Creation. To Eve, the Lord said "I will intensify the pangs of your childbearing; in pain shall you bring forth children. Yet your urge shall be for your husband, and he shall be your master."¹⁴ These consequences directly impact the highest expressions of femininity for "the heart and body of a woman, and all of her being, is created to manifest her self-donation in two ways: by being a spouse and a mother."¹⁵

The first consequence the Lord mentions is in regard to motherhood—one of the "two particular dimensions of the fulfillment of the female personality"¹⁶—making it painful to give birth to children. This reality, brought upon women by sin, is redeemed in the New Testament through the pain of the Mother who stood at the foot of the cross of her Son who redeemed the world and everything in it. Thus even this pain reveals the dignity of women in being able to unite the pain of motherhood, an essentially feminine mission, to the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary.¹⁷

Genesis notes, too, that the spousal relationship between the woman and her husband has suffered from

their sin. The woman will long for her husband, but instead of being received as a gift, he will dominate her as master over servant.¹⁸ This relationship of domination inhibits the appreciation and indeed the expression of the gifts of femininity since the woman no longer feels that she gives herself *freely*. When a woman responds to the love she receives with her self-donation, she expresses the fullness of her femininity since mankind “cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself.”¹⁹ Yet, since women gives herself upon receiving and being loved, it can be said that the gifts of womanhood are rooted in the gift of her receptivity. The spousal exchange of self-giving that was so natural before sin is now obstructed by the domination of man which prevents woman from receiving the love that will move her to repeatedly and continuously give herself. Although here it is evident how feminine receptivity was, in a sense, blocked in its bridal and maternal expressions through Original Sin, the world would soon see the fulfillment of the Father’s designs for woman. The richness of femininity that was obscured in sin is seen in its fullness in the figure of the Blessed Virgin Mary who “*assumes* in herself and embraces the *mystery of the ‘woman’* whose beginning is Eve.”²⁰

Mary: The Fulfillment of the Feminine Mystery

“*Mary* means, in a sense, a going beyond the limit spoken of in the Book of Genesis (3:16) and a return to that ‘beginning’ in which one finds the ‘woman’ as she was intended to be in *creation*, and therefore in the eternal mind of God.”²¹ The “limit” spoken of in Genesis, this “limit” that Mary goes beyond, can be seen as referring to the lack of expression of femininity. To the extent that Eve denied the gift of receiving and being obedient to the Will of God, Mary embraced and fulfilled His Will. This receptivity and docility to God’s plan can be seen in every moment of the Blessed Virgin’s life and are given a particularly feminine perspective when viewed in light of the Visitation.

The exchange of greetings between Mary and her cousin Elizabeth gives clear insight into the womanhood of Mary—her humility, her faith, and her fruitfulness. Upon her arrival at the house of her cousin, Mary sings the Lord’s praises in her great Magnificat. The words of her joyful song, “He has looked with favor on his lowly servant”²² echo her response at the Annunciation “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”²³ Her humility before God’s plan can be clearly seen, but she also does not hesitate to recognize and acknowledge the great gift that He has given her in her identity and mission as the Mother of God. She shows her gratitude in the next verse of her canticle, “He has done great things for me” (Luke 1:49) which expresses “*the discovery of all the richness and personal resources of femininity*, all the eternal originality of the ‘woman’, just as God wanted her to be, a person for her own sake, who discovers herself ‘by means of a sincere gift of self.’”²⁴

The humble gratitude with which she acknowledges the gift of her femininity gives Mary a hidden source of power. It is in humility that the strength of the female character can be found. It is with humility that the woman’s Offspring spoken of in the Protoevangelium will crush the head of the serpent²⁵ and it is in humility that Judith, one of the many biblical types of Mary, defeated the enemy of Israel in the person of Holofernes.²⁶ The sins of the serpent and of Holofernes were sins of pride—both sought to be like God. It is significant that a woman plays a crucial role in crushing these prideful figures. Since pride can only be defeated with humility, and women are depicted as so instrumental in their defeat, it shows how fundamental humility is to the feminine identity and at the same time the strength that it gives to those who possess it.

Elizabeth, in turn, greets the Mother of the Lord with a double blessing: “Blessed is the fruit of your womb... [and] Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.”²⁷ These two blessings are directed toward what lies at the heart of femininity as exemplified in Mary: faith and receptive fecundity. It is these two attributes that help characterize the femininity of Mary and are evident in her every movement reaching even to the foot of the Cross.²⁸

The Blessed Virgin Mary’s complete faith and receptivity are perfectly portrayed in the moment of the Annunciation. Her profound faith enabled her to respond promptly and humbly to the angel, embracing with love the mystery of the Incarnation in which she would play a central role. “She responded, therefore, with all her human and feminine ‘I,’ and this response of faith included both perfect cooperation with ‘the grace of God...’ and perfect openness to the action of the Holy Spirit.”²⁹ This “perfect openness” is her receptivity that not only allowed the Lord’s Word to be conceived in her spiritually, but physically. The power of a woman’s receptivity lies at the heart of the Incarnation.

St. Augustine affirms this power when he writes that “Mary conceived first in her heart by faith before she conceived him by the power of the Holy Spirit in her womb.”³⁰ He thus links the spiritual receptivity of faith with the physical and maternal receptivity that is particular to women. Although all of humanity, man and woman, is called to be fruitful,³¹ woman is given a uniquely *receptive fecundity* in that they are called to receive this new life and bear it within them. This gift has both physical and spiritual expressions which are exemplified to perfection in the life of Mary.

After having been “perfectly open”³² in faith, the Blessed Virgin Mary physically expressed her feminine fecundity in conceiving and carrying the Divine Child in her womb. The docility and receptivity expressed in the conception of life “signify the woman’s readiness for the gift of self and her readiness to accept a new life.”³³ Since it is through a “sincere gift of self”³⁴ that a woman truly finds herself, there is a profound relationship between the identity of a woman and motherhood which entails the literal gift of the “energies of her body and soul.”³⁵ This capacity to carry life, and the physical and emotional gifts that are inherent to it, enables a woman to be “filled with wonder at this mystery of life, and ‘understands’ with unique intuition what is happening inside her.”³⁶ The intuitive understanding of the value of life is rooted in the intimate communion of a mother and the child since they are uniquely united for nine months before the child comes into the world.

In fact, “the moral and spiritual strength of a woman is joined to her awareness that *God entrusts the human being to her in a special way.*”³⁷ It is primarily Mary who attests to this strength, but it is also affirmed by the women who faithfully stood along the Via Crucis. Mary had already accepted the pain of this moment when Simeon prophesied in Jerusalem, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”³⁸ She accepted this reality of her own pain so that she might be united with her Son, and so she could be attentive to Him at His most difficult hour—the true strength and gift of a mother.

The feminine appreciation of the human person and intuition of women to genuinely acknowledge the humanity of others is of great importance in the society of today—a society that “needs a heart if humankind is to survive without becoming totally dehumanized.”³⁹ Women, with this intuitive connection with all of humanity, can be this heart. This is a great responsibility for women and at the same time it is a call and a plea from society and from the Church for women to live their femininity to its fullness. In the present “culture of death” women must embrace their identity of being bearers of life and realize their “mission to humanize society by being witnesses to the primacy of love, to the primacy of the heart”⁴⁰ which is derived from their maternal gifts.

The spiritual expression of the maternal receptivity flows from a woman’s natural capacity to bear life physically in her womb. Whether this capacity is realized in a marital vocation or is renounced for the undivided love of God in consecrated chastity, the same gifts endowed to women for physical maternity are invaluable for spiritual maternity. In Mary, both physical and spiritual maternity are united.⁴¹ Just as she physically received the Word made Flesh in her womb and thus provides the prototype of motherhood in the flesh, she also received each word the Lord gave her and “kept all these things in her heart.”⁴² Holding all these things within her, she awaited the time when they would be birthed into the hearts of others through the life and mission of her Son.

In Christ’s own teaching, He praises His mother’s maternity beyond her motherhood of the flesh. Responding to a woman in the crowd who blessed the woman who raised him, he says, “‘Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it’ (Lk. 11:28). He wishes to divert attention from motherhood understood only as a fleshly bond, in order to direct it towards those mysterious bonds of the spirit which develop from hearing and keeping God’s word.”⁴³ Both the physical and spiritual fecundity of Mary flow from hearing and keeping God’s word—she accepted the Lord’s call at the Annunciation and continued to keep “all these things in her heart.”

In her perpetual virginity and her spousal self-gift to God, she lived in the “readiness [that] is open to all people, who are embraced by the love of Christ the Spouse.”⁴⁴ This receptivity to the new life that the Lord would entrust to her became manifest at the Wedding at Cana. It was here that Mary showed her maternal care over the guests at the wedding party in her discreet attention to their needs. Here too, she demonstrated her intercessory power with her Son. “Mary places herself between her Son and mankind in the reality of their wants, needs and sufferings...she acts as a mediatrix not as an outsider, but in her position as mother.”⁴⁵ This passage of John Paul II is revealing since it clearly refers to Mary’s motherhood of Jesus while

at the same time describes a distinctly maternal attentiveness to the needs of the wedding party. In not specifying which role of “mother” Mary was acting in at that moment of intercession, he poignantly shows that her role as intercessor is, from every angle, a maternal role.

While the maternity of Mary over mankind is first demonstrated at the Wedding of Cana, her presence and receptivity at the foot of her Son’s cross more fully manifest the motherhood she will have over the whole Church. It is this moment in Mary’s life that exhibits the powerful synthesis of all of her feminine characteristics. She is so united with her Son, so sensitive to His needs, that she herself experiences His pain in her heart. This union is both the result of her physical maternity of Jesus which brings her to a special understanding of life, but also of her spousal union with the Lord which enables her to bear spiritual fruit through the pain she experiences. In her, particularly here at the moment of her Son’s redeeming sacrifice, the virginal and maternal dimensions of the feminine vocation are united and complete each other.⁴⁶ It is here that she truly becomes the Mother of the Church as she receives the children whom her Crucified Son entrusts to her through the beloved Apostle John. This “‘entrusting’ is the response to a person’s love, and in a particular to the love of a mother”⁴⁷ since life is “entrusted to woman in a special way.”⁴⁸ It is also significant that the full manifestation of Mary’s femininity coincides with the birth of the Church on Calvary.

Church: Bride of Christ and Mother of Humanity

Just as Eve was created from the rib of Adam,⁴⁹ the Church was born from the Blood and Water which flowed from the Pierced Heart of Christ.⁵⁰ Already from the Church’s inception, the foundations of its feminine character are evident. This nature is explicitly stated in St. Paul’s writing when he says “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her...”⁵¹ Christ’s love for the Church is here equated with a spousal love. Christ, being the Incarnated Second Person of the Trinity, takes the masculine role of initiating the act of love while the Church, as Bride, *receives* His self oblation. “The Bride is loved: *it is she who receives love, in order to love in return.*”⁵² It is precisely this receptivity in front of God that constitutes the femininity of the Church. Within the Church, each of her members must respond to the redemptive and spousal love of her Bridegroom, who is Christ.⁵³ Thus, both men and women are called to receive the spousal love of God “in order to love in return.”

The bridal identity of the Church can be seen again in Revelation. “And I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.”⁵⁴ It is evident here that the Bride is the figure of the Church who has been prepared by her Bridegroom for their heavenly union. In the Church’s spousal relationship with Christ, She unites herself with Mary’s virginity. And like the Blessed Virgin, the Church bears fruit for it is “precisely such virginity...[that] is the source of a special spiritual fruitfulness: it is the source of motherhood in the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁵

In these passages the Church is depicted as Bride, but she is also Mother as she births divine life into souls through the sacraments. St. Paul utilizes this maternal language on behalf of the Church when he writes “My children, for whom I am again in labor until Christ be formed in you!”⁵⁶ The Church, through her members, labors to bring the grace of God to the world so that they “might have life.”⁵⁷ Not only do St. Paul’s words illuminate the maternal role of the Church, but they also appropriate a Marian identity to the members of the Church—for it is she in whom Christ was formed. It is precisely through “the womb of the feminine heart - which represents the heart of the Church, since the Church is a She - [that] the Holy Spirit desires to place His fecundity...and to spiritually give birth to Christ through history.”⁵⁸ Thus it is through the femininity of the Church that the life of the Holy Spirit is received and gifted to the world.

Within the Church who is Bride and Mother there are two fundamental principles which are essential for her mission to be fruitful in the world: the Marian and the Apostolic-Petrine. Because the Petrine principle is established as the “*alter Christus*,” it is thus a particular channel of graces to be received by the feminine and spousal character of the Church which she then brings forth into the world. The existence and relationship between these two principles within the Church is an institutional manifestation of the complementarity between the male and female vocations—which is reasonable given the activity of both men and women in the life of the Church. Servant of God John Paul II begins to specify how these two fundamental principles relate to each other when he says, “...in the hierarchy of holiness it is *precisely the ‘woman’*, Mary of Nazareth, who is the ‘figure’ of the Church. She ‘precedes’ everyone on the path to holiness...In this sense, one can say that the Church is *both* ‘Marian’ and ‘Apostolic-Petrine.’”⁵⁹

Servant of God John Paul II alludes here to the unique mission of the Marian principle of the Church—she

precedes the Petrine principle in the journey of faith.⁶⁰ Clearly the Blessed Virgin preceded the Petrine principle both in time and in faith since she was the first to know Christ and to hold Him in her womb. Mary's relationship with the Petrine is extended in the Church today through the relationship of the Marian with the hierarchical Church in her bishops and priests. Each of them was formed into an "*alter Christus*" within the womb of Mother Church, through the Marian principle of the Church. Through their ordination these men become spiritual fathers to the faithful, to the children of the Church. Again the Marian is seen to *precede* the Petrine in some sense, but there underlies this mystery a great responsibility for women. Just as natural fathers must "*learn his own 'fatherhood' from the mother,*"⁶¹ so must these spiritual fathers learn their fatherhood from mothers—from women. They must first look to the maternity of the Church and the Blessed Mother, but in a tangible way, women who authentically live their femininity incarnate this maternal reality and thus they can be channels through which priests can learn to fully embrace their spiritual paternity.

The presence of the Blessed Mother on Calvary was the only consolation to Our Lord's Heart as He hung from the Cross. So too, can the Marian principle support the Petrine in their mission which so often leads them to the Cross. In this capacity, "the Marian dimension of the Church embraces the Petrine...and cares, nourishes, accompanies, covers, supports the Petrine, and help[s it] to live the fullness of its identity and mission."⁶² Women, too, brought the news of Christ's Resurrection to the Apostles,⁶³ and so the Marian principle can and should bring the value of a feminine perspective to the service of the Petrine and the Church. There is a need for this communication of feminine insight—the Church is calling for it: "Christian women all, keep on talking to the successors of the apostles, to...priests who are their helpers, telling them the joyful news...Do not be afraid!"⁶⁴ This call must be answered because it is in the union of the Marian and the Petrine through their participation in Christ's redeeming act and the power of the Holy Spirit that life is born. Women are being asked in the Church to live and share their "feminine genius" for the "renewal and humanization of society and for the rediscovery by believers of the true face of the Church."⁶⁵

Women can help to reveal the "true face of the Church" as Bride and Mother precisely through their own femininity. They are in a unique position to incarnate this identity of the Church. Because of this reality, they have the responsibility to be faithful examples of this role for all members of the Church since "*all human beings—both women and men—are called through the Church to be the bride of Christ, the Redeemer of the world.*"⁶⁶ All members of the Church today need a solid example from women in order to fully live their identity within the Church—the Bride of Christ.

This call to women to model their femininity as God created them is a call to share the "feminine genius." It is a call to live authentically their ability to be loved and love in return—to be fruitful in the order of love. Perhaps the greatest gift that women can bring to the world through living genuinely their femininity is a love for life and respect for the person. The feminine identity which is rooted in the bridal and maternal vocations provides the foundation from which women, and indeed humanity, can begin to build the culture of life. Women must realize their integral role in the building of this culture and for this reason "our time in particular *awaits the manifestation* of that "genius" which belongs to women, and which can ensure sensitivity for human beings in every circumstance."⁶⁷ This is the call that Servant of God John Paul II gave to women as he awaited the realization of their true dignity as women. This appeal of the Church, through John Paul II, to women to live fully their femininity reached its apex when he appointed several women to prestigious positions in pontifical commissions and universities.⁶⁸ This action brought into concrete form all that he had taught about womanhood and provided an example for the world of the value of feminine participation in shaping the future.

His call to women echoes even beyond the end of his pontificate and awaits their response. His successor, Pope Benedict XVI has, in his own way, continued this legacy of John Paul II in encouraging the activity of the feminine genius. He recognizes how "*urgently we need...women as bearers of love, teachers of mercy and artisans of peace, bringing warmth and humanity to a world that all too often judges the value of a person by the cold criteria of usefulness and profit.*"⁶⁹ Through the authority of the Successor of Peter and the movement of the Holy Spirit, women are being called forth to manifest the strength and dignity bestowed upon them by God. Even now, the work of Servant of God John Paul II to elevate and make known the gift and mission of the feminine genius is bearing fruit. It will continue to have an impact on society as long as there are receptive hearts which en flesh his teaching and embrace the gift the Father has given the world in the feminine genius.

- ¹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 46
- ² John Paul II, *Christifideis Laici*, 51
- ³ St. Bernard of Clairveaux, *Magnificat*, August 20, 2009
- ⁴ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 19
- ⁵ Genesis 1:27
- ⁶ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 10
- ⁷ Genesis 2:20
- ⁸ Cf. Genesis 2:22
- ⁹ John Paul II, General Audience, February 6, 1980
- ¹⁰ Cf. Genesis 2:23
- ¹¹ c.f. John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 7
- ¹² Genesis 3:6
- ¹³ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 7
- ¹⁴ Genesis 3:16
- ¹⁵ Mother Adela Galindo, *Motherhood, A Vocation of Love*
- ¹⁶ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 17
- ¹⁷ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 19
- ¹⁸ Cf. Genesis 3:16
- ¹⁹ *Gaudium et Spes*, 24
- ²⁰ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 11
- ²¹ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 11
- ²² Luke 1:48
- ²³ Luke 1:38
- ²⁴ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 11
- ²⁵ Cf. Genesis 3:16
- ²⁶ Cf. Judith 13:6-8
- ²⁷ Genesis 1:42, 45
- ²⁸ Cf. John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 14
- ²⁹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 13
- ³⁰ St. Augustine, *Sermon 293*, quoted in Mother Adela Galindo's *Motherhood, A Vocation of Love*
- ³¹ Cf. Genesis 1:28
- ³² John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 8
- ³³ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 18
- ³⁴ *Gaudium et Spes*, 24
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 18
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, 18
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 30
- ³⁸ Luke 2:34-35
- ³⁹ Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, Homily, April 6, 2007
- ⁴⁰ Mother Adela Galindo, *A Woman's Fiat: Her Gift to the Church*
- ⁴¹ cf. John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 17
- ⁴² Cf. Luke 2:51
- ⁴³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 20
- ⁴⁴ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 21
- ⁴⁵ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 21
- ⁴⁶ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 17
- ⁴⁷ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 45
- ⁴⁸ Cf. John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 30
- ⁴⁹ Cf. Genesis 2:22
- ⁵⁰ Cf. John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 22
- ⁵¹ Ephesians 5:25
- ⁵² John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 29
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 27
- ⁵⁴ Revelation 21:2
- ⁵⁵ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 43
- ⁵⁶ Galatians 4:19
- ⁵⁷ cf. John 10:10
- ⁵⁸ Mother Adela Galindo, *A Woman's Fiat, A Gift to the Church*
- ⁵⁹ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 27
- ⁶⁰ Cf. John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 3, 26

⁶¹ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 18

⁶² Mother Adela Galindo, *A Woman's Fiat, A Gift to the Church*

⁶³ Cf. Matthew 28:8

⁶⁴ Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, Homily, April 6, 2007

⁶⁵ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration *Inter Insigniores*, 10

⁶⁶ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 25

⁶⁷ John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 30

⁶⁸ Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Agency, *Pope John Paul II Looked Closely at Role of Women in Church*

⁶⁹ Benedict XVI, Homily, May 10, 2009

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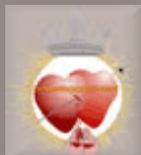
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