



UP TO THE SOURCE

Adoratio with St. John Paul II

FOR WOMEN

Awareness of a Mission

From “On the Dignity of Women” (*Mulieris dignitatem*), St. John Paul II, 1988

30. A woman's dignity is closely connected with the love which she receives by the very reason of her femininity; it is likewise connected *with the love which she gives in return*. The truth about the person and about love is thus confirmed. With regard to the truth about the person, we must turn again to the Second Vatican Council: “Man, who is the only creature on earth that God willed for its own sake, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of self.” [59] This applies to every human being, as a person created in God's image, whether man or woman. This ontological affirmation also indicates the ethical dimension of a person's vocation. *Woman can only hand herself by giving love to others (...)*

While the dignity of woman witnesses to the love which she receives in order to love in return, the biblical “exemplar” of the Woman also seems to reveal the *true order of love which constitutes woman's own vocation*. Vocation is meant here in its fundamental, and one may say universal significance, a significance which is then actualized and expressed in women's many different “vocations” in the Church and the world.

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. Of course, God entrusts every human being to each and every other human being. But this entrusting concerns women in a special way—precisely by reason of their femininity—and this in a particular way determines their vocation.

The moral force of women, which draws strength from this awareness and this entrusting, expresses itself in a great number of figures of the Old Testament, of the time of Christ, and of later ages right up to our own day.

A woman is strong because of her awareness of this entrusting, strong because of the fact that God “entrusts the human being to her,” always and in every way, even in the situations of social discrimination in which she may find herself. This awareness and this fundamental vocation speak to women of the dignity which they receive from God himself, and this makes them “strong” and strengthens their vocation.

Thus the “perfect woman” (cf. Prov. 31:10) becomes an irreplaceable support and source of spiritual strength for other people, who perceive the great energies of her spirit. These “perfect women” are owed much by their families, and sometimes by whole nations.

In our own time, the successes of science and technology make it possible to attain material well-being to a degree hitherto unknown. While this favours some, it pushes others to the edges of society. In this way, unilateral progress can also lead to a gradual *loss of sensitivity for man, that is, for what is essentially human*. In this sense, 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: because they are human, and because “the greatest of these is love” (cf. 1 Cor. 13:13).

Thus a careful reading of the biblical exemplar of the Woman—from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation—confirms that which constitutes women’s dignity and vocation, as well as that which is unchangeable and ever relevant in them, because it has its “ultimate foundation in Christ, who is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever.” [61] If the human being is entrusted by God to women in a particular way, does not this mean that *Christ looks to them for the accomplishment of the “royal priesthood”* (1 Pt. 2:9), which is the



treasure he has given to every individual? Christ, as the supreme and only priest of the New and Eternal Covenant, and as the Bridegroom of the Church, does not cease to submit this same inheritance to the Father through the Spirit, so that God may be “everything to everyone” (1 Cor. 15:28). [62]

Then the truth that “the greatest of these is love” (cf. 1 Cor. 13:13) will have its definitive fulfillment.

Litany of Women Saints

Saint Mary, Mother of God	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Anna, Prophetess	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Mary Magdalene, Disciple	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Agnes, Virgin	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Helena, Mother	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Monica, Mother	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Olga of Kiev, Regente	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Bridget of Sweden, Widow	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Widow	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Joan of Arc, Heroine	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Elizabeth of Portugal, Empress	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Teresa of Jesus, Doctors of the Church	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Marianne Cope and Saint Catherine Drexel, Religious	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Catherine Tekakwitha, Lay Woman	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, Religious	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Theodore Guerin and Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne, Religious	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Gianna Beretta Molla, Wife	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Luigi and Saint Maria Beltrame Quattrochi, Spouses	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Religious	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Philosopher, Carmelite, Patron of Europe	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, Patron of Missions and Doctor of the Church	<i>Pray for us</i>

A Woman's Prayer

Thank you Lord for having created us as women.

We are well aware that in our culture it is unclear what the gift of being a woman means. That is why we approach your Son, Jesus Christ, confident that He will enlighten and confirm us with regard to the mystery and depth of our being.

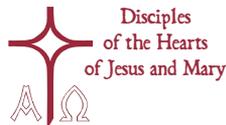
We were created in complementarity with man, as a sign of mutual help. It is in receiving ourselves as a gift and giving ourselves as a gift that we fulfill our vocation, welcoming at the same time the gift of man, and the gift of human being. Through Motherhood we are filled with wonder at the uniqueness of each person.

Lord, you have made us capable of seeing people and the world around us from the heart, uniting reason and feeling. Our vision shares in Yours, for we see others in their greatness and limitations, placing ourselves at their service.

May the Virgin Mother, model of every woman, help us so that our feminine genius may creatively enrich the life of our families and society. Amen.

Marian Mass

Join us every Saturday at 8:15 am for **Marian Mass**. We are journeying with the encyclical of St. John Paul II, *Redemptoris mater*.



Visit our St. John Paul II web page at stmarylitleton.org/stjohnpaul2.