# In the Church

“God created mankind in His image.  
In the image of God He created them.  
Male and female He created them.” (Gen 1:27)

Who in the Church has authority?

* You can probably guess that it’s the Pope and bishops (successors to Apostles).
* Priests receive faculties from the bishop
* To borrow a phrase from a friend, “old celibate men [telling me how to live]”

***“Why only ‘old celibate men?’ Why can’t women do X?”***

* An implicit, 3-part polysyllogism underlies this question:

1. Concerning the nature of the sexes:
   1. Premise 1: If 2 people/groups are the same, one can do anything the other can do.
   2. Premise 2: Men and women are the same.
   3. Conclusion: Therefore, women can do anything men can do.
2. Concerning what people should be allowed to do:
   1. Premise 1: People should be allowed to do anything they are able to do.
   2. Premise 2: Women can do anything men can do.
   3. Conclusion: Therefore, women should be allowed to do anything men are allowed to do.
3. Concerning justice in the Church:
   1. Premise 1: An institution that does not grant women the same privileges and positions it grants men is unjust.
   2. Premise 2: The Catholic Church does not grant women the same privileges and positions that it grants men.
   3. Conclusion: Therefore, the Catholic Church is unjust.

* In deductive reasoning (which uses syllogisms), if one premise is incorrect, so is the conclusion.
* In cases where the sexes are the same, the Church ought to (and usually does) treat them the same.

But why “old celibate men?”

* Old
  + Relative term: no age requirements beyond reasonable maturity
  + An invitation by God has to be heard and acted upon: Discernment takes several years.
  + Preparation to perform tasks: Formation takes another 7 years
  + People with higher authority should be experienced and wise: Gaining experience (“smelling of the sheep”) takes a very long time.
* Celibate
  + The norm in the Roman Rite
  + Required for bishops in both East and West
  + Fully committed relationship *to God and the Church*
    - The Church has complete and undivided time/attention of its leaders.
    - No room for anything else
* Men
  + Called to be “Another Christ”
    - Ordained priests act *in the person of Christ the head*
      * Christ was a man.
      * Christ chose men to be His Apostles.
        + All of whom were persecuted, tortured, and killed (except maybe John).
        + Personal thought: Perhaps this was a mercy towards women so they would not have to undergo the same treatment.
        + Who are we to question God’s reason for doing this?
      * The Apostles saw fit to appoint male successors.
        + Male priesthood is Judeo-Christian: neighboring cultures had priestesses, who often served a sexual function.
    - Roles of Christ (and therefore of Church leaders)
      * Priest: offers sacrifice to God on behalf of the people
      * Victim: what (whom) is being sacrificed? His own body!
      * Servant: Christ (and priest) gives up glory and esteem to become a servant to lift up humanity. (CCC 85)
      * Note: these are “active” roles of a *lover*; we, the Church, are in a “receptive” position as *beloved*.
      * Bridegroom: Christ will “marry” the Church! At the end of time, we will all be in *union* with Him!
    - Feminine nature doesn’t work with these roles (esp. last one).
      * NOT saying that women are unsuitable to fill the role. Rather, the role is not fitting for women…like a 300+ lb. lineman trying to fit into a pair of skinny jeans.
      * NOT saying women can’t perform active roles, simply *this* active role

What “authoritative” role do women play?

* If a priest in his masculinity embodies Christ as lover, Woman in her femininity embodies the Church as beloved!
  + Menstrual cycle as liturgical calendar
  + Eve came from Adam’s side, as the Church came from Christ’s on the cross.

“Eve was not taken out of Adam's head to top him, neither out of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him.”

– Matthew Henry, Welsh nonconformist minister, from his Commentary on Genesis

* + Woman is the crown of creation, as the Church is the crown of history.
* Feminine nature shows all of us (male and female) a model of how we are to respond to Christ.
  + Receive Christ and bear Him to the world
  + As a mother watches what she eats for the health of both herself and her baby, we should mind what we let into our bodies and minds for the sake of both ourselves and our neighbors.
  + Image of what human nature will be like in the next life
* It’s no wonder why gender (esp. true femininity) is under such violent attack.

### **Defining Terms**

Definitions from Trent Horn:

* Woman=a person whose body is ordered toward gestation
* Man=a person whose body is ordered toward insemination

Is there sex in soul?

Quaker poet Susanna Wright (1697–1784) argued against the traditional understanding of men’s intellectual & moral superiority:

“Reason rules, in every one, the same. No Right, has Man, his Equal to controul, / Since, all agree, There is no Sex in soul.”

* Dualism: sex is only in the body, which the soul is trapped in
  + Underlies modern gender theory and transgenderism.
* Christian anthropology: humans are body-soul unions.
  + God made your body and soul for each other.
  + You can’t be trapped in the wrong body.
  + We’ll get our bodies back & be men & women for eternity.
  + Gender essentialism and sexual complementarity

What femininity is NOT

* Passivity
* Dependency
* Incomplete/imperfect maleness
* Frailty/weakness
* Derivativeness
* Secondary or inferior glory

Feminine Strengths

* See JPII’s encyclical Mulieris Dignitatem, discussing the feminine genius
* Generosity
* Receptivity
* Web logic (lateral thinking), as contrasted with ladder logic (linear thinking)
* Giving men a reason to be strong
* Compassion and empathy

***Christlike Qualities***

* Compassion and mercy
* Feeding with our bodies
* Childbearing as a unique opportunity to share in Christ’s Passion
  + Potential of being forsaken in the pain of childbirth
  + Exposing the most intimate parts of our bodies, usually to unfamiliar men
  + Personal thought: As Christ keeps His 5 wounds in His glorified body, mothers might keep their stretch marks in their glorified bodies as signs of how they gave glory to God.

Image of man

“A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.” (1 Cor 11:7-9)

* NOT secondary glory or God’s image at a remove
* Woman is equal to Man, signifying that God wants to make mankind equal to Him.

“By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled Himself to share in our humanity.”

* + Throughout history, parallel to the growing recognition of woman’s dignity has been the unveiling of God’s plan to make us like Himself.

### **What is Feminism?**

***3 main types***

1. Liberal feminism: seeks political & legal equality through reforms within liberal democratic society.
2. Social feminism: labor-based; evolved from proletarian women’s movements.
   1. Marxist: pits men and women against each other in ongoing struggle analogous to class conflict
3. Radical feminism: calls for radical reordering of society to eliminate male supremacy.

***4 Waves***

1. 19th and early 20th centuries: women’s education and suffrage
   1. Christian humanists like Thomas More believed in women’s education long before, but it hadn’t become widespread.
2. 1960s: Women’s Liberation Movement, whose radical wing gave rise to radical feminism.
3. 1992: focus on individuality and diversity
4. 2012: uses social media to combat sexual harassment, violence against women, and rape culture. #MeToo Movement

***Dangers***

* Misandry, as misogyny is a danger of patriarchy
* Seeking equity rather than equality
  + Glass ceiling
  + Gender pay gap
* Insisting women need to be the same as men to be strong
  + Looking down on women who choose “traditional” roles like housewifery
  + What makes a “strong female character” in media?
* Seeing family and motherhood as obstacles or burdens
  + Abortion and birth control pill, which thwart the natural workings of the female body
  + Lack of education on the female reproductive system