*In transforming culture so that it supports life, women occupy a place, in thought and action, which is unique and decisive. It depends on them to promote a "new feminism" which rejects the temptation of imitating models of "male domination", in order to acknowledge and affirm the true genius of women in every aspect of the life of society, and overcome all discrimination, violence and exploitation.*

Pope John Paul II

*The Gospel of Life,* 1995

The Siena Symposium is an interdisciplinary faculty group, founded at the University of St. Thomas in 2003, and interested in developing the new feminism called for by John Paul II in *Evangelium Vitae,* his 1995 Encyclical “The Gospel of Life.” We are named after St. Catherine of Siena, a medieval philosopher and theologian, whose love for the Church and impact on the culture of her time is well documented. Along with St. Theresa of Avila, St. Catherine was named a Doctor of the Church by Pope Paul VI in 1970; they were the first two women to be so proclaimed by the Church.

The mission of the Siena Symposium is to both respond to the Holy Father’s call to promote this “new feminism” and to enable both women and men to understand their God-given nature and dignity as they work together to recover our culture and create human history.

Our purpose is to encourage and engage in research that investigates the philosophical and theological foundations of human personhood and its practical implications for the complementary roles that women and men play in the creation of a truly human society. We sponsor and support public forums such as workshops and conferences, as well as promote individual initiatives and study groups designed to achieve these ends.

Our hope is to serve as a local and national focal point for the study and promotion of a true understanding of authentic womanhood, its relationship to authentic manhood, and the meaning of male and female complementarity in achieving the Church’s social vision.