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** Knights of Malta **

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Chancellor's Update

Women Priests – Not Possible

In the book of Genesis we read about the creation of man and how God placed him into the garden of paradise to dress it and to keep it. God commanded this man not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, otherwise he would die the death. We read how God showed all the living creatures to this man Adam and how Adam proceeded to name them.

Yet, with all the beauty of paradise and its abundance of creatures there was not found a helper for Adam. Thus, God cast a sleep upon Adam, took one of his ribs and fashioned a woman for him. Then the Lord God showed her to Adam, who said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman because she was taken from man."

The narrative continues with the deception of the woman by the serpent to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The woman then convinced her husband also to eat of the fruit. After God confronted them, he punished the woman by multiplying her sorrows and the man by increasing the toil under which he would labor. They and their future descendants were cast out of paradise.

People consider the transmission of original sin and its punishment to us a result of the sin of Adam and Eve. This is a mistaken notion for St. Paul tells us "through one man sin entered into the world and through sin death"(Romans 5:12). What then would have been the situation if Eve alone had sinned and Adam had resisted the temptation? St. Thomas Aquinas answers, "Original sin is transmitted by the first parent in so far as he is the mover in the begetting of his children...Therefore Original sin is contracted, not from the mother, but from the father: so that, accordingly, if Eve, and not Adam, had sinned, their children would not contract original sin: whereas, if Adam, and not Eve, had sinned, they would contract it."(Summa Theologica Part I-II Q81, Art.5).

So far, we have seen the primacy given to man by God in Genesis and the transmission of the sin of Adam by St. Paul and

St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Paul continues, "Therefore as from the offense of the one man (Adam) the result was unto condemnation to all men, so from the justice of the one (Christ) the result is unto justification of life to all men. For just as by the disobedience of the one man the many were constituted sinners, so also by the obedience of the one the many will be constituted just" (Romans 5:18-19). The healing of the rift or bridging the abyss between God and humanity was performed by Jesus Christ, the only Mediator of Justice between God and man, for He alone is both God and man. St. Paul describes this when he says, "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, bearing witness in his own time" (1 Timothy 2:5,6).

To re-present the Redemption through the Mass (Sacrifice of Calvary) and to make the benefits of His death available to people of all times, Jesus, the only priest in the Catholic Church, instituted His priesthood. Those chosen by God for this work act in His name, and act as mediators between God and the people, hence the term "alter Christus" (another anointed one) "(Christ [Greek, *Christos*), equivalent of the Hebrew word *Messias*, meaning anointed]" *The New Catholic Dictionary*, Page 208, 1929). Consequently, those chosen for this role must follow the order or rank set down by God in the Garden of Eden, viz.: they must be males.

To ask any Pope to allow women to be priests is futile because that is asking him for something he cannot give. Peter can loose only what Peter has bound, but Peter has not bound this - it has been bound by God Himself.

For those who question this choice made by God, we remind them of the words of Scripture, "Have I not a right to do what I choose? Or art thou envious because I am generous?" (Matthew 20:15) In commenting on this verse, St. Gregory says that entrance into the Kingdom of heaven is granted only by the goodness of God. Murmuring against the will of God is foolish. One may murmur if he is deprived of something that is due, but not if that which is withheld is not due.

God invites us all to enter into the kingdom of heaven. He has offered us many pathways; it is not possible for all to enter through the path of the male priesthood.

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