

APPENDIX I

Synopsis and Codification of the Reflections and Questions Raised at the International Theological Conference on "Deaconesses, the Ordination of Women, and Orthodox Theology"

1. How important, for the Orthodox Church's theological arsenal, is the fact that the institution of deaconesses has a conciliar ecumenical and canonical foundation, which in fact has never been repealed by subsequent synodical decision?
2. Since deaconesses were installed into their ministry through ordination (*hierotonia*), which was the same as that for the major orders of the clergy, and not by simple laying on of hands (*hierothesia*), and their ordination had an absolute likeness in form and content with the ordinations of the major order of the clergy, does not the reluctance by many Orthodox Churches to proceed to the rejuvenation of the order of deaconesses affect the witness of the Church today?
3. Can the clear assurance in the ancient prayers that Christ did not ban women *also* from having liturgical duties in the churches (see, "rejecting no woman...from serving in your holy houses" [ὁ μηδὲ γυναῖκας...λειτουργεῖν τοῖς ἁγίοις οἴκοις σου ἀποβαλλόμενος]) help the Orthodox Church to immediately proceed to the rejuvenation of the order of deaconesses?
4. Can the proposed distinction of the sacramental priesthood into "diaconal" and "hieratic," i.e., a quantitative rather than qualitative distinction, help the Orthodox Church to restore her traditional ancient practice and ordain deaconesses?
5. How can the interpretation in the canonical sources that the deaconess, as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, held a higher position even than that of the presbyters, who were considered symbols of the Apostles, affect the possibility of upgrading the status of women in relation to the theological legitimacy of their participation in the diaconal sacramental priesthood?
6. Can Orthodox bishops at any time, without any relevant conciliar decision, ordain deaconesses and accept them into the major orders of the clergy?
7. If the Orthodox Church is characterized by its liturgical (and eucharistic) theology, how crucial is it today to revive the order of ordained deaconesses for their necessary missionary witness, particularly in the area of ministry?
8. If the human person is determined by his/her relationship with others, and if the Eucharistic community is for the Orthodox the primary framework for constructive and virtuous relationships, which are fully possible for both men and women, on what theological ground can one today exclude women from even the diaconal sacramental priesthood?
9. Does the presence of demonic elements (e.g., ideas about women being cursed for their culpability in the Fall and their eternal punishment in subjugation to the man, as well as about their impurity with their consequent marginalization in the Church's life of worship and administration, etc.) compromise the Church's witness to the world, additionally raising an enormous ethical problem?
10. Throughout Western Christian history, there has been a gradual, perhaps unconscious, degradation of women on three issues: the status and position of Mary Magdalene, of St. Junia, and the institution of deaconesses. The long-standing tradition of the East, on the other hand, takes pride in these persons and institutions. How can this affect the position of the Orthodox Church?
11. How can the now academically indisputable evidence in the New Testament and in the early Christian centuries of important women "apostles" (e.g., Junia) affect the

- Orthodox theological argument on the need for the rejuvenation of the order of deaconesses, and even on the discussion of women's ordination?
12. If Great Orthodox theologians, such as St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom, speak about the priesthood with metaphors based not on male paternal models, but rather on examples of virtue for the community, and if both theses hierarchs use both masculine and feminine metaphors to describe the method and the ministry of the priesthood, what theological arguments can justify the exclusion today of women even from the diaconal priesthood?
 13. Does Patriarch Gregory of Antioch's reference connecting women, until the 6th century, with the apostolic office and ordination («Μαθέτω Πέτρος ὁ ἀρνησάμενός με, ὅτι δόναται καὶ γυναῖκας ἀποστόλους χειροτονεῖν» PG 88, 1864b) not demonstrate that there is at least some evidence that the Church held a different attitude in the Eastern Christian tradition regarding the liturgical role of women?
 14. Does the exclusive “male priesthood” – derived from the historically indisputable male form of the Incarnate God – constitute a binding element of divine grace? How strong is this theological argument, and how consistent to the dogma of Chalcedon, is?
 15. Is the exclusion of women from the sacramental priesthood, especially from the “diaconal” one in the course of history, based on human law (*de jure humano*) or divine law (*de jure divino*)?
 16. What impact can the close terminological connection that St. Basil the Great repeatedly makes in his anaphora between “diaconal” and “sacramental” have on the liturgical role of women?
 17. On the thorny issue of the ordination of women, should the Orthodox Church and its theology use liturgical, canonical, Trinitarian, Christological, ecclesiological, eschatological or sociological criteria?
 18. In selecting theological criteria, should priority be given – and if so, how much – to the long-standing “primary” *liturgical* tradition of the Church, over the various *doctrinal* expressions that were subsequently formulated?
 19. Is it theologically legitimate to use human, biological concepts of gender and the supposedly masculine or feminine structures of each of the persons of the Holy Trinity?
 20. How and to what extent does the basic Orthodox theological position, that at the eschaton there will be no discrimination based on biological sex, influence the debate about the liturgical and sacramental role of women?
 21. Does the invocation of elements of ontological reduction and the division of the human being into two hierarchically superimposed sexes negate the doctrine of the Divine Incarnation and annul its objectives?
 22. If, according to Orthodox Christian anthropology, the archetype of the human being is Christ, does the invocation then of the male sex of the Word of God provide theological, canonical, historical-critical, and liturgical grounds for the exclusion of women even from the diaconal sacramental priesthood?
 23. If every human person is created unique, complete and free, designed to achieve deification (*theosis*) through his/her virtuous life, how is possible theologically to define the nature of man, or even his virtuous life, on the basis of gender? Does this not lead to a denial of the completeness of human nature at the crown of creation, as well as its call to the “likeness”?
 24. Regarding the ministry of the priesthood, does not the selective use and transfer of practices based on gender—which theologically and anthropologically permit the impairment of the human person—substantially undermine rather than encourage the achievement of the Orthodox ideal of *theosis*?