

ABSTRACT

Fr. John Chryssavgis

The principal focus of this presentation is not merely the historical and theological, or even the liturgical and canonical dimensions of women and the diaconate or women and ordination, but rather the pastoral and practical concept of authority and ministry in the church. There can be no clear understanding of the priesthood or even of the episcopate unless we first properly appreciate the diaconate. Out of his experience as a deacon of over thirty years, Fr. John Chryssavgis claims that the theology of the priesthood should not begin from the top down, but rather from the notion of humble service and *diakonia*, without which none of the priestly ministries make any sense at all. Fr. John concludes that a creative revival of the diaconate could become the source of resurrection for the ordained ministry in general, thereby playing a crucial role in the mission of the church. In this respect, the restoration of the diaconate may well prove both timely and vital.