



St. Mary & St. Phoebe Consecrated Sisters

ΝΙΣΩΝΙ ΝΙΝΗΕΤΒΙΩΠΑΙΚ ΝΤΕ ΘΗΘΟΥΑΒ ΜΑΡΙΑ ΝΕΜ ΘΗΘΟΥΑΒ ΦΟΙΒΗ



A RESPONSE TO FEMINISM: 2 POINTS

Please note that it is not the purpose of this article to argue either for or against women working outside of the home

Feminism makes the claim that in order for women to be valued in society, they need to occupy the same positions and take on the same roles as men. The mission statement is that women can do anything that men can do, and if not with the same level of expertise and success, then better. The claim is that in order for society to move forward, women must be allowed to do everything that is expected of men. And they must be treated in exactly the same way as men are treated.

But let us examine this point a little bit more carefully: “In order for women to be valued in society, they need to occupy the same positions and take on the same roles as men.” In other words, “in order for a woman to matter, she needs to be like a man.” Does this not, in the very foundation of their movement for women’s rights, imply that a woman actually has no value **as a woman**?

Who says that in order for her to matter, she has to be able to do everything a man can do? What made this the standard for significance? Why does she need to be chasing after someone else’s accomplishments in order to be important? Do we say, for example, that a bird needs to behave like a lion for it to be important? Or that a rooster has to be able to do everything a chicken can do? Or that accountants need to have all the skills that lawyers have? Or that a teacher needs to be able to cook like a chef? We certainly do not. Actually, we say that what makes a bird so unique and beautiful is its ability to sing and fly, and do all the things that the lion, with all of its power, might, and authority, in fact cannot do.

It is very clear that women and men are different – they have different capabilities, strengths, characteristics, and roles. They even look different. Why insist that they have to be the same? *So God made man; in the image of God He made him; male and female He made them* (Gen 1:27).

A second point feminism makes is that men should not have higher status than women. They do not find meaning or value in this hierarchy, but rather are offended by it. However, perhaps they mistakenly identify honor with hierarchal status. Just because man is the head of woman does not necessarily mean that man is higher in honor than woman. It means simply that this is his role and function and responsibility (1 Cor 11:3; Eph 5:22-24).

Saint Mary, the Mother of God, who is higher than the Cherubim and the Seraphim and the heavenly hosts, is the Queen of heaven. She is the most honored and revered saint. She is higher in honor than the patriarchs, the prophets, the martyrs. However, we do not ever read that she even gave a sermon, let alone attempted to become an apostle or priest. She was honest and faithful in her task and role and with her responsibilities as a mother throughout her life, without ever expecting to be given more or demanding more.

Even though she knew so much about the life of her Son, more than anyone else, she did not exalt herself and try to show off her knowledge. Rather she remained humble and obedient. When the angel announced to the Holy Family that it was time to escape to Egypt and that it was time to return to Israel, both times he appeared to St. Joseph, the earthly father of our Lord Jesus Christ. St. Joseph was the one who led the Holy Family. And certainly we do not read that St. Mary argued with St. Joseph about this, claiming that she was the Child's mother. No, rather the Queen of heaven humbly and respectfully submitted to St. Joseph throughout her earthly life. What great humility is found in our mother. *For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted* (Luke 14:11).

As Christians living in the 21st century, let us continue to look to our roots and heritage for answers regarding these age-old questions and not be *carried about with various and strange doctrines* or *with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them* (Heb 13:9).