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WOMEN IN MINISTRY
SS. SIMON & JUDE
WESTLAND, MI**

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Introduction

Good afternoon. My name is Deacon Paul Lippard. I am pinch-hitting today for Bishop Tom Gumbleton, whom many of you know is recovering from pneumonia.

Deacon Paul Lippard

In my days in the seminary, when I was preparing for the diaconate, I had the opportunity to ask one of my professors why we never learned anything about women deacons. She looked over her glasses and said nothing. "Enough said." Sometime later, after I was ordained, I came across the book, *Women Deacons - Past, Present and Future*, co-authored by Dr. Phyllis Zagano. I learned more about the history of the diaconate than I ever learned in my seminary studies. As a member of the Elephants' education committee, I just knew that we had to bring Dr. Zagano to Detroit to speak to us.

Dr. Phyllis Zagano is an internationally acclaimed Catholic scholar, who has lectured throughout the United States, and in Canada, Europe and Australia. She is the author or editor of sixteen books in religious studies, including groundbreaking work on women in the diaconate. Two of her works, *Women in Catholicism* (Macmillan, 2011) and *Holy Saturday* (Crossroad, 2000), have won Catholic Press Association book awards. Her newest books include: *Ordination of Women to the Diaconate in the Eastern Churches* (Liturgical Press, 2013), *Women in Ministry: Emerging Questions on the Diaconate* (Paulist Press, 2012), and *Women Deacons: Past, Present, Future* (Paulist Press, 2011).

In addition to her academic writing, she has written on women deacons in many Catholic magazines, including *US Catholic*, *Commonweal*, *America*, and *St. Anthony Messenger*. Her regular column, *Just Catholic*, appears in the *National Catholic Reporter* and in other publications in the country and around the world.

Just a few days ago, on January 25, she received the Isaac Hecker Award for Social Justice from The Paulist Center Community in Boston for "her prolific body of work that has constantly echoed the cry of the poorest in our society for dignity and for justice, both inside and outside the Church ... specifically the dignity of all women." She has taught at Fordham, Boston, Yale universities, and currently holds a research appointment at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

Ladies and gentlemen: Dr. Phyllis Zagano. (Applause)

Women in Ministry

Dr. Phyllis Zagano

Thank you to Bishop Gumbleton, Fr. Bechard and Deacon Lippard for bringing me to Detroit, a suffering city that needs so terribly and needs so deeply the ministry of women. I find it quite interesting that three clerics have coordinated my visit. There must be a different view these days from behind the altar and ambo. [Laughter]

I think that different view may come from the fact that, metaphorically at least, the bishop who stands behind you is not so likely to stab you in the back if you say that the Church needs to find a way to include women in governance and ministry. Well, maybe yes; maybe no. After all, the bishop of Rome has - so far, at least - twice said that, "We need to create still broader opportunities for a more inclusive female presence in the Church."

Now, whatever could that mean? I'll tell you up front: I do not think those words of Pope Francis could, or can, mean women ordained to priesthood in the Catholic churches. Over the centuries, especially since the 12th and 13th centuries, there's been too much argumentation over whether women are capable of

being ordained. The arguments go in two directions. Women cannot receive the Sacrament of Order. I actually heard in a seminary classroom, from a priest professor of sacramental theology, I heard that ordaining a woman is like ordaining a lamppost or a cat. [Sounds of disbelief] Now, women were never ordained as priests, you say, and therefore cannot be ordained as priests. Now, I can recite the argumentation about women and priesthood, pro and con; but I'm not here to talk about women in priesthood. I am here to talk about women in the diaconate, in the ordained diaconate, as it has been rejuvenated in the Roman Church over the past 40 years or so.

So let's begin. What's a deacon? I think, to begin it, might be helpful to take a look at the diaconate as it is understood within the Archdiocese of Detroit. From the Archdiocesan website we have the following:

The Archdiocese of Detroit welcomes inquiries from Catholic men. The deacon is a man of faith called by the Church to serve God's and God's people as an official representative of the Church. He assists the bishop and priests in performing sacraments, proclamation of the Gospel and by dedicating himself to the charity of others. The deacon is the animator and promoter of what the community of faith must be - a community of service. Whether married or single, the majority of deacons continue to support themselves through their own profession or occupation. By continuing in their occupation, deacons have the opportunity to bring the presence of Christ to the community in a unique way. They become the symbol of Christ and the Church serving the world. Ordinarily deacons offer their ministry freely to the Church and receive no monetary compensation for their services.

As the late New York Monsignor Eugene V. Clark said to me over lunch at the Union League Club many years ago, "So, you want to be a volunteer?" Well, I thought, and I still think, that is demeaning. I think such a view demeans the ecclesial vocation to serve the people of God and I think it demeans ecclesiology. It demeans what it means when we speak about Church.

So, this afternoon, however, I'm going to speak more about the recent history of the discussion of women in the diaconate. I'm going to speak about the discussions that have been going on, really now, for 40 years since Pope Paul reopened the diaconate as a permanent vocation in our Church. I'll tell too, at the start, the diaconate never died out, at least in the Eastern Churches, at least in the Churches of Orthodoxy.

A deacon of this Archdiocese has most kindly given me a list of objections floating around Detroit to including women in the diaconate. So let's begin with these - you have them on your yellow papers and maybe we can come across answers to these genuine fictions. Every statement on this list of ten objections to restoring women to the ordained diaconate is false. I'm not David Letterman, but we do have a top ten. [Laughter]

1. Women were deaconesses and not deacons. Their roles were different.
2. The women in the New Testament were the wives of deacons.
3. The deaconesses of the early Church are like nuns today. They function pretty much the same.
4. The early Church had deaconesses, because people were baptized naked and we don't do that anymore. Besides the women only assisted, they didn't do the baptism. [Laughter]
5. Deaconesses only assisted with responses at Mass. They didn't preach, baptize, wear a stole or vestments or assist at the altar. They were more like cantors.
6. Deaconesses were not ordained, they were just blessed.
7. The Church teaches that women cannot be ordained, therefore there have never been any women deacons.
8. If there really were women ordained as deacons, how come the Vatican hasn't sent out statements stating such?
9. The slippery slope. If we ordain women to the diaconate, they will want to become priests.
10. Once women are ordained as deacons, they will want to take over the Church. (Much laughter).

Okay, I'll go for the last one. [Laughter] But the Pope said not that long ago that we need to create still broader opportunities for a more incisive female presence in the Church. And I think Pope Francis'

comments about the role of women in the Church bring hope to those of us who are asking for the restoration of women to the ordained diaconate. Of course despite that new hope there are several obstacles and the topic is still under discussion. The most recent formal statement from the International Theological Commission - I'll call that the ITC, and that's of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which is the CDF - the most recent formal statement in 2002 specifically notes that restoring women to the diaconate remains a question for "the ministry of discernment" of the Church.

Now, I'll speak this afternoon about three things. First, I'll talk about the recent history of the discussion, how it has taken place, what it involves administratively; and then about the two major objections to women as deacons: the iconic argument and gendered diaconate. We'll come back to those two: the iconic argument and the gendered diaconate.

So here's the recent history. In 2002 the ITC, the International Theological Commission, published a long awaited document on the diaconate including considerations about women in post-Second Vatican Council renewed diaconate. The discussion about women as deacons has been around for a long time. The fathers of the Second Vatican Council brought up the possibility of returning women to the diaconate. Now, when the diaconate was being restored as a permanent grade of order, Pope Paul VI reportedly asked the ITC about women as ordained deacons. Now, while the ITC did not publish a document then, in 1974, a 15,000-word formal paper by an Eastern liturgy scholar, Cipriano Vagaggini, OSB Cam., appeared in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, which is a publication of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. It appeared in Italian. Everybody knew about it - at least scholars knew about it - but it labored untranslated until a month ago, when we published this translation, the *Ordination of Women to the Diaconate in the Eastern Churches*. Vagaggini concludes that women can today receive ordination to the order of deacons, "by virtue of the use of the Church."

Now, despite Vatican II's interest in discussing the question, there was not a lot of interest among reformers for women in the diaconate, because discussion was focusing on women as priests. These initial discussions were energized at the time in the 1970s by the ordinations of women in the United States as Episcopal priests; and then that inspired a document from the CDF called *Inter Insigniores*, which presents two arguments against women as priests. First, the iconic argument: priests must resemble Jesus; and secondly, the argument from authority: Jesus chose male apostles. Now, related to these two is the historical argument that women were never ordained to priesthood in the tradition of the Church. CDF's--the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's--document on women as priests specifically states that it omits any discussion of women as deacons.

Now, Vagaggini was a member of the ITC when he published the work on women in the diaconate, but the ITC does not seem to have taken up the diaconate formally following Paul's inquiry. But academic discussion continued with Vagaggini at the lead; and his articles were known to the ITC throughout the 1990s. There were other debates. There was a big debate between two French language liturgy scholars Roger Gryson and Aime Georges Martimort, and they argued in opposite conclusions. Gryson said women were definitely ordained as deacons and could be ordained again. Martimort said, "No, women were never sacramentally ordained and are incapable of receiving sacred ordination."

Now, in 1987, an Italian journal, called *Il Regno*, published another document by Vagaggini. He had been asked by the Synod on the Laity to discuss the question of women as deacons; so he published a 1500-word essay, which was his intervention to the Synod, in which case he forcefully restated the findings of the long article. He basically says, "Look! There have been liturgies--up until the 14th century actually--that demonstrate that women were ordained in ceremonies the same as men, ordained as deacons. Secondly, there is plenty of historical evidence about women in the diaconate and that substantiates the fact that they were serving as such. Third, yes, women deacons were known to assist at baptisms, but they had a lot of other tasks which are known in history. And fourth, the Church has changed today." And, in fact, I quote from Vagaggini, "a legitimacy and urgency for competent authority to admit women to the sacrament of the order of the diaconate." That was in 1987.

Vagaggini recalls especially - and this is a very interesting point - he recalls especially that the Lebanese Maronite Synod of 1736 - now this is very, very recent Church history - and so an 18th century synod of another Catholic Rite allowed its women deacons, who were mostly abbesses at the time, to administer extreme unction to their nuns. Now this particular document, again, lay untranslated until we discovered it and translated it, finishing the translation just last May.

Now, following the 1987 Synod on the Laity, the issue of women in the diaconate remained under discussion, especially in Rome and it underlies all the discussions coincidental to the drafting of *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, which is the Vatican document against the ordination of women as priests. It is a 1994 document. This is the document that everybody fights about whether it is a definitive teaching, whether it is an infallible teaching of the Church. The fight is not about the content of the document; the fight is about the claim that it is infallible. So in the middle of all this, there was another meeting of the International Theological Commission for five years, from 1992 to 1997; and they took up the diaconate. Now there were interesting people on the committee: Taizé Father Max Thurian was the chairman; Austrian Bishop, Christoph Schönborn, was on it, some very, very fine intellectuals; and also a former graduate student of Joseph Ratzinger, Father Henrique de Noronha Galvao.

By 1997, a subcommittee finished a document - it was 17 or 18 pages long - and it was passed by the entire International Theological Commission. It basically says, "No big deal! You can ordain women as deacons." However, it was not signed by the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, one Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, and, therefore, not published. Why not? Well, you know why.

Thereafter, Vatican officials attempted to tamp down rumors about this short document. They tried to make it go away, say it didn't exist. At a press conference, Cardinal Dario Castrillón Hoyos who was prefect of the Congregation of the Clergy; said, "Restoring deaconesses would run contrary to the intent of the two recently published clarifications about the diaconate." Another bishop said, "Well, Christ was a male." Well, yes.

Anyway, discussions of women in the diaconate grew in the United States and in Europe; and in 1999 the "Dialogue for Austria" voted overwhelmingly in favor of restoring women to the order of deacons. But, meanwhile, the ITC continued to chug along; working in particular about restoring women to the diaconate; but the subcommittee that was discussing it was completely replaced, with the exception of Ratzinger's graduate student Galvao. There were a couple of other interesting members, one Gerhard Ludwig Müller, and another, Luis Antonio Tagle; and we'll get back to them.

In 2001 there was a report that a 78-page working document on the diaconate was being published and would be passed; and it was actually passed and published in October 2002. It's a seven-section document. So the document on women as deacons grew from 17 or 18 pages to something like 78 pages, from maybe one or two sections to seven sections. I was thinking about this this morning. I find it very interesting that, in terms of studying the history of women in the diaconate, it skips basically from the fourth to the twelfth centuries. There is no history of women in the diaconate in those centuries in the document; and, of course, that is when we have the deepest history of women in the diaconate, but somehow that didn't get in. The discussion is interesting but the focus has radically changed, because the initial shorter version was an attempt to answer whether women could be included in the diaconate, and that attempt seems to have said, "Yes, women can be deacons." The focus of the new subcommittee seems to have been an attempt to prove a couple of things: First, that the diaconate was a grade of the sacrament of Holy Orders; and, second, that women, therefore, cannot be admitted to it. So, despite the lack of historical documentation about women - and as I said they are very curious historical leaps in the ITC document - the document presents conclusions regarding their ordination to the diaconate.

Now these are the conclusions and as I recall, this is my translation. It is a French document, which English translation was done by the Catholic Truth Society in London. The document only appeared on the Vatican webpage in French up until maybe two years ago, when the discussion started to widen, so now it is up there in Italian, in Portuguese and English; and there is a new English translation being done by the International Diaconate Committee in Scotland, because the current English translation - how shall we say- is a little shaded. (Laughter)

Regarding women as deacons, in 2002 the ITC concluded, and I quote:

With regard to the ordination of women to the diaconate it should be noted that two important indications emerge from what has been said up to this point:

First, the deaconesses mentioned in the tradition of the ancient Church, as evidenced by the rite of institution and the functions they exercised, were not purely and equivalent to deacons.

Second, the unity of the Sacrament of Orders in a clear distinction between the ministries of the bishops and the priests on the one hand, and the diaconal ministry on the other, is strongly underlined by ecclesial tradition, especially in the teaching of the Magisterium.

And third, in light of these elements, which have been set out in the present historical theological research document, it pertains to the history of discernment, which the Lord established in his Church to pronounce authoritatively on this question.

To me, that's a big ..."we don't know." Clearly, the ITC's conclusions don't rule out the restoration of women to the diaconate. In fact, it has been noted by several scholars and by prelates, that the ITC is inviting further discussion on the question. Even so, each section of the document seems specifically aimed at eliminating women from the sacrament of Orders. Portions of the document hint at the iconic argument that I mentioned earlier, arguing that, even if women could function as deacons, they could not actually be persons who were *in persona Christi servi* - in the person of Christ the servant - because, the document argues, the deacon is more than a functionary: a deacon images Christ and women are incapable of so imaging Christ.

Such is the crux of the argument against women as deacons. It's generally understood and accepted that diaconal ministries, whether ordained or not, are in large part already carried out already by women. The high proportion of women among lay ecclesial ministers, and among the world's women religious, who take up non-ordained tasks, supports general understanding of the ministry of service - the function of the deacon - can and is well undertaken by women. There are hundreds of thousands of women who serve already in lay ministries, either directly or indirectly, on behalf of their bishops.

So, while many of the tasks of the deacon are permitted to lay persons, certain functions, including preaching and judging, are restricted to clerics. There is deep traction against women as clerics. For, restoring women to the ordained diaconate would bring women into the clerical caste. Then they could receive facilities to preach within the law as well as to have ordinary facilities for witnessing marriages, for baptizing. Women ordained as deacons would be able to fully obtain certain offices that are currently now restrained to clerics and by that I mean, a woman who is a chancellor of a diocese, with certain paperwork she has to run down the hall and get some guy to sign it, because she can't. A woman who is a single judge on a tribunal can write the finding, but cannot sign it. So there are a lot of distinctions. It's almost like the distinction between the officer and the enlisted in the military. But, as a cleric, a woman deacon would be a cleric, and would be able to do these things.

Now, the CDF doesn't seem anxious to bring women into the clerical caste. And the only major theological objections to the work, to the idea, as women as deacons, which Gary Macy has talked about historically - I know he was here talking to you and I talk about in terms of what can happen in the future - the only arguments basically come from American theologians: Sr. Sara Butler, a Missionary Servant of the Most Blessed Trinity, who is now in Philadelphia and who is a member of the ITC, and Gerhard Ludwig Müller, who is now prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and soon, on February 22, will become a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church. So, what they do though is each of them extends the iconic argument - Jesus was male - against women as priests. They extend that to the diaconate.

And Butler has presented her objections. She actually surprised me writing in *The New Diaconal Review*. You can find the back and forth on line. It's a Scottish journal. It is called *The New Diaconal Review*. She blindsided me in 2011, writing against women in the diaconate. Gary Macy, Bill Ditewig and I wrote a response; and Sara then responded to us. So now I have responded to her in the November 2013 issue of *The New Diaconal Review*.

I like Sara and I've known her for a long time. Years ago, I agreed I would stay out of her lane, which is women as priests, if she would stay out of mine, which is women as deacons but, somehow, she's crossed into my lane. And ever since Deacon Bill Ditewig was denied permission to speak in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, because he wrote a book with me, I called up the people involved in the

Archdiocese of Philadelphia. I have met with them twice, including with the person who wrote the finding to keep Bill Ditewig from speaking there. And the upshot of it is: in the fall of 2014, Sara Butler and I will be on stage at St Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia at a closed event for the priests, and bishops, and seminarians, and deacons of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. They haven't set a date, but Sara is anxious to get on stage with me. And I said, "You know, it is crazy for us to cross swords across the ocean," and she's in Philadelphia, and everybody is talking about it. So why not see what the opposition is talking about, and have me come and have a conversation with Sara? And so we are going to do that; and I think that will be helpful because, right now, we are kind of at an impasse.

But the detailed discussions that we've had in writing obscure the real general concerns of Sara Butler following Gerhard Müller. First the iconic argument, because when you apply it to the iconic argument, it requires the ordained, the *ordinandi*, be male as was Jesus. And second, she brings up a supposed "gendered diaconate" of history; and then brought forward to control these present realities. And this is very important, because the argument is posited that women who served as deacons were understood to be in a different role from the men who served as deacons because of the tasks they undertook. Now, these, together lead to the assertion that those women were not sacramentally ordained, which goes against the findings of liturgy scholars, such as Cipriano Vagaggini but rather they were blessed for their service.

So the combination of this iconic argument and the argument of a gendered diaconate form the principle objections to admitting women to Orders today. And I will tell you that the FADICA women - if you read about it in *America Magazine* - the FADICA women who were over in Rome, again last October, and every office they went to where they brought up the question of women in the diaconate, these were the two discussions they were given, the two objections. One, that the gender diaconate of history was different and they weren't really ordained; and, by the way, women can't be ordained, because of the iconic argument - you have to look like Jesus to be ordained - so the iconic argument, the notion of a gendered diaconate, very serious, because the notion of each argues that women cannot image Christ. But it is precisely the Christ, not the restricted human Jesus: It is the Christ who is sign and symbol of the sacrament of Orders. It is the risen Christ who is imaged in ministry. It is the risen Christ whose life lives on in the Church. Don't let anybody tell you, "You don't image Christ." Don't! [Applause] It is a terrible inference in the notion that women don't image Christ, an inference that stretches well beyond internal Church discussions. I have a column that moved yesterday in the *National Catholic Reporter* on line - sometimes I'm in the paper - but it's a pastoral letter on men and it talks about educating men to recognize that they are fully human, and so are women and it's written in the style of a pastoral letter. We all image Christ; and we need to constantly, daily, see the Christ in each other. That's the only thing that is going to heal anything, believe me.

Anyway, the iconic argument: it is the principle theological argument against women in the diaconate; and I think it has developed more recently, because the historical arguments for women in the diaconate are so terribly strong.

Now, this is where you get the comments about ordination that I mentioned earlier on your little pieces of paper, the yellow sheets: number 6: deaconesses were not ordained just blessed; seven: the Church teaches that women cannot be ordained; eight: if there really were women ordained as deacons, how come the Vatican hasn't said so? I love that one. [Laughter]

Now, the arguments of *Inter Insigniores* in 1976 and *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* in 1994, each states that they who were to be ordained as priests must physically resemble the maleness of Jesus. And the argument against women as deacons is: since they don't physically resemble Jesus, they cannot be ordained as priests; therefore, they cannot be ordained as deacons. Now this discussion: "Well, John Paul said this, and there are theological reasons." But it's almost impossible, it's really impossible, to apply the iconic argument to the diaconate and most scholars are just happy to leave the iconic argument to history, because it is an outmoded theological anthropology. It's an outmoded way of talking about the human person. It's embarrassing. It's downright embarrassing. Elizabeth A. Johnson says, "The image of Christ does not lie in sexual similarity to the human man Jesus, but in coherence with the narrative shape of his compassionate, liberating life in the world, through the power of the Spirit."

However, theologians such as Butler and Müller rely on this iconic argument to argue against women in the priesthood, as well as against women in the diaconate and I think it's because of their understanding

of the unicity of orders. They are so concerned that if women can't be priests, therefore, women can't be deacons because the opposite might be true: if women can be deacons, then women can be priests. And I think that that is something that they need to continue to think through, and I don't know that they are going to be able to think it through completely. The linkage implies that in order to be able to be ordained a deacon, you have to be physically eligible to be able to be ordained as a priest; but it's an abandoned argument and it just doesn't work.

The stance that the deacon, priest and bishop are so closely linked - and I know Gary Macy talked about this: the *cursus honorum* - as to make it impossible to separate eligibility from one order to the other. It mitigates, it argues against the notion of the diaconate as a permanent vocation. It also argues against history, because, basically, it's deacon-bishop, priest-bishop. The *cursus* really developed only in the Middle Ages when you have deacon-priest-bishop. So, if you want to talk history, it's deacon to bishop and priest to bishop. As I said to Father Bechard yesterday at dinner, "I don't think they are worried about women as deacons; I think they are worried about women as bishops, (Laughter) because in the ancient Church, in order to be ordained a deacon, you had to be eligible for 'higher office;' and they weren't talking about the priesthood." Okay? We have something like 64 popes who were never priests; they were deacons, and then, they were named popes. So that stance is difficult, but on the other hand, it is countered by the canons of the Church, which were redone by Ratzinger, redone by Pope Benedict: canons 1008 and 1009 were actually changed to say that the deacon on the one hand and the priest and bishop on the other hand are totally different and separate ministries. Like the man said, "You could look it up." It's also in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This happened around 2009.

However, we still have the 2002 document; and it so closely aligns the sacramentality of the diaconal ordination to the priesthood, and therefore the Eucharist, that it implies that, because ordination to the diaconate is a sacred ordination, it cannot be received by women, which is a difficult thing to say. The specific configuration of the deacon is not *in persona Christi Capitas Ecclesiae* - in the person of Christ the Head of the Church - and there's lots of history about the priesthood and its relationship to Jewish history, how the priest has worked. You're saying that woman cannot be *in persona Christi servi* - in the person of Christ the servant - and it's a very difficult statement. The iconic argument for Butler and for Müller is linked to the maleness of Christ and the essence is something that talks about the twelve men who were icons of the Lord. So, again, we are back to the maleness. Most people call that a naïve physicalism.

In fact, the Christian living of baptismal promises demands that we all be "other Christs;" and the intent of our Christian spiritual traditions is to bring people to such a realization. So, this is a very difficult argument. It also cannot be inserted in the present debate, because history proves women have been ordained to the diaconate. Now, following on the assertion of the iconic argument, as regards women as deacons, is the argument that women of history who served as deacons had a specifically gendered role. They were not the equivalent of men - this is the argument - who served as deacons; and, therefore, cannot be welcomed to the diaconate today.

So we now have the question of "gendered diaconates." The historical arguments against women as deacons take the form of gendered diaconates: the women weren't really deacons; they were deaconesses who did different things. And these comprise five of our list of top ten objections I listed for you earlier:

1. Women were deaconesses and not deacons.
2. They were wives of the deacons.
3. They functioned like women religious.
4. They are no longer needed for adult baptisms.
5. They never really did anything anyway; they never had any liturgical roles.

As I said earlier, the 2002 document presents really minimal research; it's disappointing research on women in the diaconate. I'm told that two members of the committee, Minnerath, a bishop in France, and Tagle, who was a bishop as well, in the Phillipines, did boatloads of historical research. There was a lot of discussion in the ITC; they had a lot of documentation; they had my work available to them; and they also had Gerhard Ludwig Müller's work available to them. I hate to say that the people- well I know, I've been told at least - one of these two, Minnerath and Tagle, dropped their positions, which were very strongly that the women deacons of history proved that women could be ordained today. In any event, I am here to

tell you that a different document came out; it dropped a lot of the history, which I will go into in a minute. Within two days of its publication, on the fourth of October in 2002, Gerhard Müller became the bishop of Regensburg. I'm sure you've heard of that diocese. And very shortly after, Tagle became the archbishop of Manila; and Minnerath became the archbishop of Lyon in France.

So, whatever was going on, it's a study document; it's a flawed document; I'd give it maybe a C+. It just seems to have dropped a lot of stuff. But we'll get back to what's in the document. Early on, they seemed to dismiss the fact that Phoebe, in Romans 16, which we heard earlier, whether Phoebe is called a deacon, *diakonos*, rather than the preferred deaconess. And the document - it's just crazy - it says you can't call her deacon in Greek, which is the word--Benedict XVI, even when he talks about Phoebe, he calls her a deacon--because that word is used more elsewhere in general terms, it doesn't really mean deacon; and secondly, the word wasn't made feminine; therefore, it can't apply to Phoebe, which makes me crazy. Because, I mean, if you call a plumber, and a girl shows up, you don't call her a "plumber-ess". [Laughter] Anyway, other historians, Kevin Madigan at Harvard and Carolyn Osiek, talk about the feminine word for deacon that only appears in 325 at the Council of Nicea. So the word deaconess didn't even exist at the time the scripture was written. They also point out that you can't really tell what is going on in Church documents, because, whether it is referring to a female name, and we've got the names of plenty of women deacons. I always think of Anna. Anna was known as the deacon of Rome; she was actually the treasurer in Rome. If Anna was a guy, Anna had trouble in 5th grade, you know? There are so many female names of deacons and it's given the shorthand of *diak*. So whether there was or was not a female ending it doesn't matter, it stands for this woman who served as a deacon.

And, as I said, it wasn't until the 4th century that the word deaconess even showed up. There's lots of other evidence. The other main thing is First Timothy, and the sentence on the women also, where they are talking about the jobs of the deacons; and meaning the women deacons also; that particular passage is swept away saying there are lots of scholars who disagree with that. Of course, they don't give you any footnote to who these other scholars are. Müller may know them, but I don't.

In fact there are only 2200 words of a 78-page document that talks about these analyses, about the ministry of deaconesses. So, they are saying that, "Oh, they didn't do this; or they didn't do that." Well, in 2200 words they are asserting with very little footnotes they didn't do this, they didn't do that. And they depend on my friend Martimort, not Gryson, who is on my side, but Martimort, who is on Müller's side. And it ignores a lot of the scholarly discussion that was going on at the time; and since then, particularly, Vagaggini and one of his cohorts, named Marucci. And it points also - and this I find very strange - to the work of a German scholar named Manfred Haucke, who is a Mariologist, and who did his doctorate against women as priests. So, somehow, a Mariologist, whose work was done about priesthood and women, is competent to talk about women in history as deacons.

So, it is very important that significant sections - and this is something that it really hasn't been published yet, but it will be more widely published in general - significant sections of the 2002 document on the diaconate bear strong, yet uncited, resemblances to a book by Müller called *Priesthood and Diaconate*. That book was published in 2000; and there are several sentences in the ITC document that are nearly verbatim from Müller's earlier work; and here's the footnote. So, Dr. Müller, we need to go see the dean, because there's a little problem here with your footnotes. His book is not footnoted at all in the ITC document, yet there are chunks of his book that are taken out and put into the ITC document. He also depends on a limited number of sources and scholars and the whole thing suggests Müller's deep involvement in the ITC document, Müller's deep involvement in an ITC document that says, "Well, you know, the women deaconesses weren't the same as men deacons, however, we recognize the difference between deacons on the one hand and priests and bishops on the other. So, you know what? We need to send it back to the committee. We need to think about this some more." Why would Müller be taking this stand? Why would Müller, who is the editor of the *Opera* Ratzinger, be taking this stand? Why would Müller, who is now following Ratzinger, following Levada, now the head of the International Theological Commission and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. They really have skewed history in this document. It is a very disturbing document to me.

And, in fact, they talk about the effective disbanding disappearance of the diaconate after the 12th century. Well, they forget about the Eastern Churches, of which there are 22 in union with the Catholic Church, and they have deacons. And there are churches with which the Catholic Churches have joint recognition of sacraments and orders. There are Orthodox Churches that ordain women to the diaconate. So in the

Armenian Church, or in the Orthodox Church of Greece, where they actually ordain women to the diaconate, using very much the same liturgical formulae that we use, because they are our cousins, and it's our history too, and the Orthodox don't invent anything, the Greeks just use what they've had. If the men deacons of orthodoxy are ordained then what about the women deacons? Now I've been asking this in academic articles and talks for a long time. No one has ever answered me, because there are two possibilities. One if you say the women deacons of Orthodoxy are not really ordained, then you have a problem with your ecumenical relations. If you say the women of Orthodoxy really are ordained, then you have a problem with a whole bunch of Catholic women; because, if Orthodox women are sacramentally ordained what about us? OK? So that just hasn't been answered.

There's been no significant discussion in the ITC document about the women deacons of Orthodoxy or in the Eastern Churches. What I think is missing, really, is documentation in Vatican documents. And the question for historians - and I don't remember if Gary Macy talked about this - is whether significant early sources have been destroyed or just not yet been discovered. Dr. Macy tells me that only about 10% of the documentation about women in the Church has been translated and that is 10% of what we had, you know. We had a little problem there with the Dark Ages, "Let's go burn down a monastery;" so there is a lot of stuff that's lost, a lot of stuff that's lost.

I think he talked to you about St. Rade Gund, who has a wonderful biography written and she was born - I know he talked to you about this - she's a sixth century queen, who was married to a not-nice guy; and being a queen, she got rid of him, didn't kill him, but she left and she begged to be consecrated a deacon. She told her bishop, "I will start a monastery, and make me a deacon." And the bishop said, "No, I can't make you a deacon. No, I won't make you a deacon." So, she said, "No deacon, no monastery!" So, you know what happened? She got ordained. And, there are similar stories in the East.

So, I'm not here to tell you that it was an easy ride for women deacons of history; but we know that they were ordained. We know that there was a continuation of the discussion. There are plenty of names; some of them I gave you, in Africa and in Rome: Ausonia in Dalmatia, Theodora of Gaul. There are canons that forbid the consecration and ordination of women as deacons, which is evidence that these ordinations were continuing, at least through the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries. They say in one canon, "You can't ordain a woman on account of fragility of her sex." So we are moving, as Dr. Macy pointed out to you, we are moving from a time in our Church, when women are seen as equal partners with men, to a time, when it seems unseemly, to a time when women are seen too fragile, to a time when women ordaining us is the same as ordaining a lamppost or a cat. And that's kind of where we are right now. And I love to bring this up to bishops, because many of them went to the seminary at the same time I did; and they heard the same thing in seminary and they get very embarrassed when I ask them whether I'm more like a lamppost or a cat? [Laughter]

Macy's work is interesting; he talks about the Pontifical of Egbert, the Archbishop of York. There are lots of others in the west, in the Gregorian Sacramentary in the tenth and twelfth centuries. These clearly include ordination ceremonies for women. There's a wonderful letter that I love, in the eleventh century, from Pope Benedict VIII to the Bishop of Porto, which specifically gives him the permission to ordain women to the diaconate; and that permission was repeated by a couple of other popes following. So the bishop in Portugal, I guess, kept phoning home and saying, "Can I still do this?" And the popes kept saying, "Yes! Yes! Yes!"

So, the combination of the liturgical rights and all this good stuff demonstrates that in both the East and the West women were ordained. It came to be put into monastery walls women were ordained as monastic women deacons. We can talk about that more and this evolution supports the gendered diaconate that women only ministered to other women, because, eventually, most of the women who were ordained as deacons were only ministering within the monasteries.

I was on interesting software, where we can look at each other and share a document, translating documents with Gary Macy not too long ago and we came across a bishop who talked about the five jobs of women as deacons: catechesis, baptism, spiritual direction, confession and extreme unction. So, enjoy them apples. [Laughter] Like Macy, I can't make this stuff up. You know, you read it; it's in Latin. Eight people in history have read it, and you're, like ... it's amazing!

The more recent discussions again are from Butler or from Müller, mostly answering me, I must say, and they are picking their sources. Butler is arguing for a separate and unordained order of deaconesses, both historically and contemporaneously. She says the one implies the other; but she forgets a lot of Eastern sources: there's Byzantine, Syrian, Gregorian liturgies, there are Roman liturgies in the West. She counts one source in her work. I think that the trajectory of the intent of these couple of theologians, and of the 2002 document, is to separate the diaconate into distinct ministries: one for girls and one for boys.

You know, I think it's clear that for proprieties' sake women were necessary in adult baptisms. I've had the opportunity in Pozzuoli, which is north of Naples, to actually go down into a baptismal pool. It's dangerous! It's a big stone, kind of concentric circles with steps; and if I was naked and oiled, I would want somebody helping me and I wouldn't want it to be a guy. I mean, it's as simple as that. So, you can see, they are correct. It was necessary and that went away; and so that need went away. But, as women deacons went back into the monasteries, the ministry continued; and if any of you are religious, you will understand it continues today, particularly in terms of spiritual direction, which very often melds itself into confession; certainly in terms of anointing, if not with oils in sacramental formulae, at least with touch; certainly with catechesis - and anybody can baptize - so these ministries are there; and they are performed by women.

I'm intrigued! I have to study more about the Lebanese Maronite women, who had the right to administer Extreme Unction to their nuns *in forma specifica* - it's a great phrase, *in forma specifica*; I always think of kitchen cabinets when I say *in forma specifica*; it sounds like formica to me. There's a papal law saying these women can administer Extreme Unction. So where does that come from? I'll read you some history from the *Didascalia*, "For there are houses where the deacons cannot send someone to their quarters; because of the heathen, you must send a deaconess." (XVI, I 34) OK? There's another one in 1960, the French Cardinal, Jean Danielou, quotes a bishop named Epiphanius, who says, "Because of feminine modesty - it may be at the time of baptism, it may be in connection with the care of the sick - "the deaconess is delegated by the priest to perform his ministry for him, so that the decorum and discretion, which are appropriate to the Church, may be safe guarded in such degree as her law allows." It kind of makes sense. More than kind of it makes sense. If you want a gendered diaconate, I'll give you a gendered diaconate.

I think women are requiring the ministry of other women. I really do. And some men may require the ministry of women. I think it's not fair for women to be only ministered to by men, not that they're not great guys, not that they don't have the training, not that they're not working themselves to death; but I think there's 153 fish in the sea and we need to catch them all. There are others about women baptizing, which is one of the objections that we came to earlier. But, I think to argue against restoring women to the diaconate is arguing against the trajectory of history. And to intertwine the two - because there is no moving on priesthood; there's just not any moving on priesthood - but to allow women to serve in equal ministries to men in the diaconate. If the Church is unwilling to recognize its own need for women ordained to the service of the bishop in equal orders and equal ministry to men for the purpose of presenting the core Christian message, then, you know, we are in trouble. That core Christian message that we all are made in the image and likeness of God, that all can be other Christs for the service of all humanity.

Now, if you step back a little bit and realize that the increased discussion regarding the role of women in the Church, especially in light of Pope Francis' both direct and indirect comments regarding women in the Church, and especially as deacons, I think you understand that it's important to assess the objections that I've outline for you to the ordained diaconate. It's important to look at these objections, whether they're formed as the top ten floating around the Archdiocese of Detroit, or they are the more formally worded objections of the members of the ITC, because I think we know what the pope thinks.

During his interview on the aircraft last summer, when he was returning from World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, Pope Francis was asked what concrete measures the Church should take, "for instance, the female diaconate or a woman at the head of a dicastery?" The question was asked in Italian by the religion editor of *Le Figaro* and it was also asked on behalf of *La Croix*, which is another French language religious newspaper. Francis said,

But women in the Church must not only - I don't know how to say this in Italian - the role of women in the Church must not be limited to being mothers, workers, a limited role. No!

It is something else! In the Church, this is how we should think of women: taking risky decisions, yet as women. This needs to be better explained. I believe that we have not yet come up with a profound theology of womanhood in the Church. All we say is: they can do this, they can do that, now they're altar servers, now they do the readings, they're in charge of *Caritas* [Catholic Charities]. But there's more! We need to develop a profound theology of womanhood.

These are Francis' words in his interview with Jesuit journal *La Civita Cattolica*; and the same words were repeated in his apostolic exhortation. What he said both in the Italian Jesuit journal, and by the way if you have a copy of the *America* magazine that has that lovely interview, it's missing two sentences that change the whole thing about women in the Church. And to this day, those two sentences are still missing on the Vatican website in the English translation. In the book form and on the web for *America* magazine the two sentences are there. We won't go into it but one of the sentences is that it's necessary for the Church for women to have a more incisive presence. We need to have more space (*piu spazio*), more positions of responsibility for women in the Church.

And the interesting thing is that the arguments against restoring women to the ordained diaconate directly oppose these words of Francis; and if truth be told, they directly oppose the words of Pope Benedict, because each of them has said that the Church needs women in greater positions of governance in ministry. Francis said in his interview, "It is necessary to widen the space for a more incisive feminine presence in the Church." His word choice is nearly identical to that of Pope Benedict XVI. In 2006 in response to a young priest during his annual Lenten visit with the priests of Rome, Benedict said virtually the same thing. He asked overall - I won't read in Italian - "Isn't it necessary, isn't it proper to ask in ministerial service ... can we not offer more space, more positions of responsibility, to women?" Benedict asked; Francis answered.

Francis seems, in fact it is very interesting in Italian: non *c'e spazio qui*. You know when you are in high school and all the cool kids are at the table and the nerd comes, "*non c'e spazio qui*" -- you can't sit here, there's no space for you here. The word that Benedict used is *spazio*; the word that Francis uses: space - *piu spazio*. We have to have more space for women in the Church. We have to make room for women in the Church. Francis said quite frankly and quite plainly, "The Church has to make room, find space for women in its mission." And I think, I really think, that the proper reception of who can be an icon of Christ, and the real recognition of the history of women in the diaconate, can prepare that space. I hope you'll agree with me. And I thank you. (Applause)

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