

SHEKINAH

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DAILY FACTS, Redlands, Calif. — Saturday, June 4, 1983

Reagan defends women's record

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Reagan, trying to boost the sagging popularity of his programs among women, is calling for women to enlist in a campaign against sexual discriminations.

"We in this administration are committed to eliminating, once and for all, all traces of unjust discrimination against women," the president pledged in a videotaped address shown Friday night at an Indianapolis conference of the Republican Women's Leadership Forum.

"We are making progress, but there is so much to be done," he said.

"Our struggle is only beginning, and I need your continued help if we are to reach our goals. When you return to your neighborhoods and communities, help us get our message out. Tell people of the progress we have made.

The president, with the taped remarks, proved

he could be in two places at one time. As the speech was screened in Indiana, Reagan was relaxing at the presidential retreat at Camp David, Mary-

land, following the exhausting economic summit meeting at Williamsburg, Virginia.

He will make his weekly radio address to the nation from the secluded camp today and return to Washington Sunday to have dinner at the home of Secretary of State George Shultz.

The president strongly defended his administration's record for bringing women into government service, pointing out that for the first time, three women are members of the Cabinet—Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler, Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole and U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick. President

Carter also had three women Cabinet members, but not more than two at one time.



FROM THE STAFF

So sorry, we are late! We have just had the third and greatest fire in our history! Something to help us realize that a higher power is doing the work and that, regardless of any effort we may think worthy of ourselves, it is nothing in comparison with that of the Ones who are in complete charge.

Though temporarily hindered by the loss of our offices and equipment, we are undaunted in our mission to spread the truths for which SHEKINAH magazine was begun thirty months ago.

Our confidence is in the promise of God, "that ALL things work together for good to them. . . who are the called" (Rom. 8:28).

Indeed, we have found that we have friends previously unknown to us. As a result of the fire, businessmen and women have provided some of our greatest necessities to set up our interim office with supplies and office furniture, etc.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our local Red Cross and to the Fire Departments of Axtell, Bellmead, Hallsburg, Lacy-Lakeview, Leroy, Mart, and Waco. They made a heroic effort to assist in every way to contain the fire. Because of the loss of electrical power to our deep well, an inadequate water supply made it impossible to save the publishing house.

We are grateful that the other sixteen buildings which house the workers were untouched.

Our hearts have been warmed by the expressions of sympathy at home and over the world from readers of SHEKINAH magazine who want the publication to continue reaching them with the latest news about our "Mother who art in Heaven." Blessed be Her name!

We have never before asked directly for means to publish, but depend upon the Spirit to impress our readers to have a part in the restoration of machinery by which the magazine is produced.

Those receiving the SHEKINAH for the first time and those wishing to contribute to the continuance of this work may send contributions to "The Restoration Fund," P.O. Box 4098, Waco, Texas 76705.

Thank you so much for your love, patience, and support. Your good wishes and prayers are deeply appreciated.

In the meantime, our friends, the printers downtown, are helping to publish SHEKINAH magazine.

Our courage is good, our determination is strong, and our faith endures. Praise be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Mother!

THE STAFF

Boys only order

Church rumpus on banned altar girls

ADELAIDE. — The Roman Catholic church has cracked down on girls serving at the altar.

Priests have been directed to have only boys as altar servers.

There are altar girls in several large city parishes. The church has ignored them because some priests want to use girls.

The Adelaide Latin Mass Society reported the church to Rome, for ignoring a ban on altar girls. The Society continues to observe to observe the Latin Tridentine Mass outlawed by the Second Vatican Council.

The Catholic Church Communications Centre today confirmed altar girls were not allowed.

Mrs. McRae, of Vale Park, said today she was

furious when she was told of the ban. "I walked out mass. There was no way I could stay inside the church and pray," she said.

Her children, Jeremy 12, Sarah 11 and Rebecca 9 have served together at the 11 a.m. mass at Walkerville every Sunday. Jeremy has been serving for three years, Sarah for two and Rebecca for nine months. Mrs. McRae who said religion was a central part of her family's life, will not allow Jeremy to continue to serve if his sisters cannot.

One priest, who would not be named, said today he would defy the ban. "There is a shortage of



Altar servers Rebecca, 9, (left, Sarah, 11, and Jeremy McRae, 12, with a picture of themselves in service gowns.

boys—50% of my servers are girls," he said. "I will not appoint any new ones, but I think I'll allow them to continue. I would find it hard to con-

front parents and tell them their daughters cannot go on the altar." He said he was aware of the church regu-

(See Boys Only, page 30)



Mayor Hazel McCallion greets Bishop Lois I. Roden, a believer in the Motherhood of God, at a meeting of senior citizens in Mississauga last week.

(Staff photo by Tim Chevrier)

Visiting bishop preaches about Motherhood of God

By JUDY HUGHES
Staff Writer

A bishop from a recently formed, interdenominational church has been flooded with calls and letters from women around the world seeking information about the foundations of the new church.

Bishop Lois Roden, head of The Living

Waters Branch, spoke to a meeting of senior citizens in central Mississauga last week about her innovative religion, based on the belief that God is a two-dimensional figure comprising both male and female qualities.

Blaming an inexact, incorrect translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew version for the prevalent belief

that God is masculine, Roden quotes dozens of passages from the Scriptures which prove to her, and followers of her church, that God is female.

Roden founded the "Motherhood of God" after witnessing "a vision of a shimmering silver angel in feminine form," through her bedroom window one night.

"I felt that God had called me," recalls Roden. "To me, it was the completion of the mystery of God."

Despite the misinterpretation of the Bible, Roden still bases the foundation of her beliefs on the ancient tome, saying there are many instances where passages in the Bible support her belief in the Motherhood of God. "Scripturally speaking, we have evidence to support this," she says.

In some instances, Roden claims the true identity of God has been deliberately tampered with by Christians who practise "patriarchal theology" citing 200 examples of obviously feminine references being changed to masculine.

Most of Roden's support from the Bible comes from the Books of Genesis, Romans, Revelations, Proverbs and Galatians. The name of her church, however, comes from the Book of Jeremiah where God pronounced that He was "the vine, ye are the branches."

Roden, a mother of six grown children whose late husband was president of The Living Waters Branch, travels to Israel two or three times every year and to many other parts of the world, and plans to visit China and Japan in the near future to "launch the gospel of the Holy Spirit Mother."

She is looking forward to the reactions of Japanese and Chinese who, she says, have always recognized the feminine qualities of God.

As editor of her church's magazine, The Shekinah (Jewish for Heavenly Mother), Roden receives requests and donations from around the world. "Information is coming in to the magazine in floods confirming the femininity of God," she says.

She hopes to use some of this confirmation when she is granted an audience with Pope John Paul II to convince him to change his mind on the ordination of women as priests. The Pontiff, says Roden, refuses to ordain women because "there is no image" in the Bible to allow him to do so.

Roden hopes that evidence found in the Naghanadi Manuscripts in Northern Egypt and in the Dead Sea Scrolls will support her case, as should the depiction of "women serving the eucharist in the capacity of bishops" found in the catacombs of Rome.

Despite her belief that God possesses at least as many female qualities as male qualities, Roden does not believe in the superiority of women. "I preach the equality of men and women," she said.

Support Grows For Women Priests

More Catholics oppose than favor the ordination of women as priests, but opposition has steadily declined since 1974.

In the latest Gallup survey, a total of 50% of Catholics express either strong or mild opposition, while 44% express either strong or mild support for the ordination of women. Six percent do not express an opinion.

In 1974, 65% were opposed, 29% in favor, and 6% were in the no opinion category.

MEN MORE LIKELY THAN WOMEN TO FAVOR CHANGE

Interestingly, Catholic men are more likely than Catholic women to favor the ordination of women to the priesthood — 50% compared with 39%.

Also more inclined to favor the ordination of women are younger Catholics, the college-educated, and those in higher income brackets.

The current survey is the latest of four (others were done in 1974, 1977, and 1979) commissioned by the Quixote Center and Priests for Equality, and sponsored by a broad-based coalition of 95 Catholic groups and individuals. The 1982, 1979, and 1977 surveys were conducted by the Gallup Organization, Inc. while the 1974 survey was conducted by the National Opinion Research Center.

In each survey, respondents were asked the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the statement:

It would be a good thing if women were allowed to be ordained as priests.

Here are the findings:

ORDINATION OF WOMEN PRIESTS (Views of Catholics)

	NORC		GALLUP SURVEYS	
	1974	1977	1979	1982
	%	%	%	%
Agree Strongly	11	15	16	20
Somewhat	18	21	24	24
TOTAL	29	36	40	44
Disagree Somewhat	18	14	17	16
Strongly	47	43	36	34
TOTAL	65	57	53	50
No Opinion	6	7	7	6
	100	100	100	100

The latest results are based on the responses of 1,323 persons who identified themselves as Roman Catholics, out of a total of 4,592 adults, 18 and older, interviewed in person, in their homes, in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the periods May 14-17, June 11-14, and June 25-28, 1982.

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Balancing Out the Trinity: The Genders of the Godhead

JOHN DART

ALL BUT the most careful of Christian Century readers might have missed it: James A. Sanders used "she" as a pronoun for the Holy Spirit in his article "The Bible as Canon" (in the December 2, 1981, issue).

It was not a typographical error, said Sanders, a professor at the School of Theology at Claremont and president of its Ancient Bible Manuscript Center for Preservation and Research. Citing the familiar theological-linguistic problem of addressing the biblical God with a pronoun other than "he"—despite the consensus that God embraces both the masculine and the feminine—Sanders explained that he decided simply as a matter of personal choice to use "she" for the Spirit of God.

Sanders's precedent is the fact that the Hebrew word for spirit, *ruach*, is of the feminine gender. The neuter word *pneuma* is used for spirit in the Greek-language New Testament. But the pronoun found in those texts is not "it," since Christian theology regards the Holy Spirit as a person rather than an impersonal force; "he" was the pronoun selected for the enabling power and earthly agent of God the Father.

However, the use of "she" as a pronoun for the Holy Spirit is more than a matter of personal choice; such usage appears to have some theological possibilities, especially if serious attention is given to certain research on early Christian texts, apocryphal as well as canonical. Initial suggestions to regard the Holy Spirit as feminine have been made by some theologians—mostly male academicians—who stay within canonical and church perimeters. However, women scholars are unenthusiastic about

the idea. "It's still two against one," says one feminist of such a revamped Trinity.

There are biblical research findings that nonetheless could "balance out" the genders of the Trinity—a step true to an early strain of Christian thinking, although not to what developed as orthodox church tradition. The balancing would require rescuing two primitive ideas found among Jesus' followers.

One concept is that the Holy Spirit was the "mother" of Jesus, and consequently of believers. The written evidence for this is both earlier and much broader than had been previously thought.

The second concept has to be presented as a theory, though a plausible one: that Jesus was considered by followers as androgynous in a significant symbolic sense. A persuasive theory proposed nine years ago holds that an early baptism brought forth a new androgynous person in the initiated Christian believer, "neither male nor female." The idea, apparently inspired by first century Jewish speculation that Adam was originally male and female, goes on to suggest that the "last Adam," as Paul once referred to Jesus, provided the model for the new believer.

If the first century notions of a maternal spirit and an androgynous Jesus were indeed early teachings that the developing church subsequently rejected (for whatever reasons), then a "balanced out" theology of the Christian godhead, informed by psychological insights, has both "modern" relevance and "ancient" precedent.

EVEN THOUGH these claims seem at first hearing to be far afield from the usual New Testament understanding, there have been some efforts to explore the idea of the Holy Spirit as feminine

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within traditional frameworks. German theologian Jürgen Moltmann is arguing for a reappraisal of the distinct "persons" of the Trinity, particularly the Holy Spirit. Contending that "monotheism is monarchism," Moltmann says some traditional ideas of God's absolute power "generally provide the justification for earthly domination" by despots and dictators.

A Moltmann lecture about the feminine aspects of the Holy Spirit prompted Neill Q. Hamilton, professor of New Testament at Drew University School of Theology, to develop the idea further. The contemporary emphasis on God as father figure, he said, "in effect makes us deprived children of a one-parent family." Drawing on certain biblical depictions of the Spirit, especially in the Gospel of John, Hamilton went on to say that Christians will find "the Holy Spirit begins to perform a mothering role for us that is unconditional acceptance, love and caring. God then begins to parent us in father and mother modes."

Catholic scholar Franz Mayr of the University of Portland in Oregon also finds the feminine image of

A case could be made that a female Holy Spirit represents an important early teaching of Jesus' followers.

the Holy Spirit to be appropriate. He notes the remark of St. Augustine (354-430) that some Christians of his day were wrongly believing that the Holy Spirit was "mother of the Son of God and wife of the Father." Augustine then cautioned, in his book on the Trinity, that even when a maternal Holy Spirit was "most chastely thought of by the pure to whom all things are pure," outsiders would think in crudely physical terms.

Mayr, on the other hand, feels that Christianity could manage a "father-mother-child" Trinity today without lapsing into physical images or watering down the unity of God. Augustine "skipped over the social and maternal aspect of God," which Mayr says is best found in the Holy Spirit.

Evangelical scholar Donald G. Bloesch makes a modest concession to views of the Spirit as feminine in his recently published book *Is the Bible Sexist?* (Crossway, 1982) by granting that the Holy Spirit could be portrayed as feminine "as the indwelling presence of God within the church, nurturing and bringing to birth souls for the kingdom." But he maintains that the Spirit who acts on humanity with transforming power "is properly designated as masculine."

With but a few exceptions, the gender-issue discussion is being carried on by male scholars. One feminist, Joan Chamberlain Engelsman, in a study of repressed female deity images in antiquity, *The Feminine Dimensions of the Divine* (Westminster, 1979), suggested three ways to restore that dimension in Christianity. Future theology, she wrote, might (1) develop the female nature of each member of the Trinity; (2) add a fourth member to the godhead in the person of the Virgin Mary; or (3) pick the Holy Spirit to describe as feminine.

At that time favoring the latter, Engelsman wrote that "the Holy Spirit is the least sexually defined member of the Trinity and... it is often symbolized by feminine images—by fire and the dove." (The dove, a visible sign of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament accounts of Jesus' baptism, was a bird often linked to female deities in the ancient Near East.) However, she now prefers her first alternative—to bring out the feminine side of all members of the Trinity.

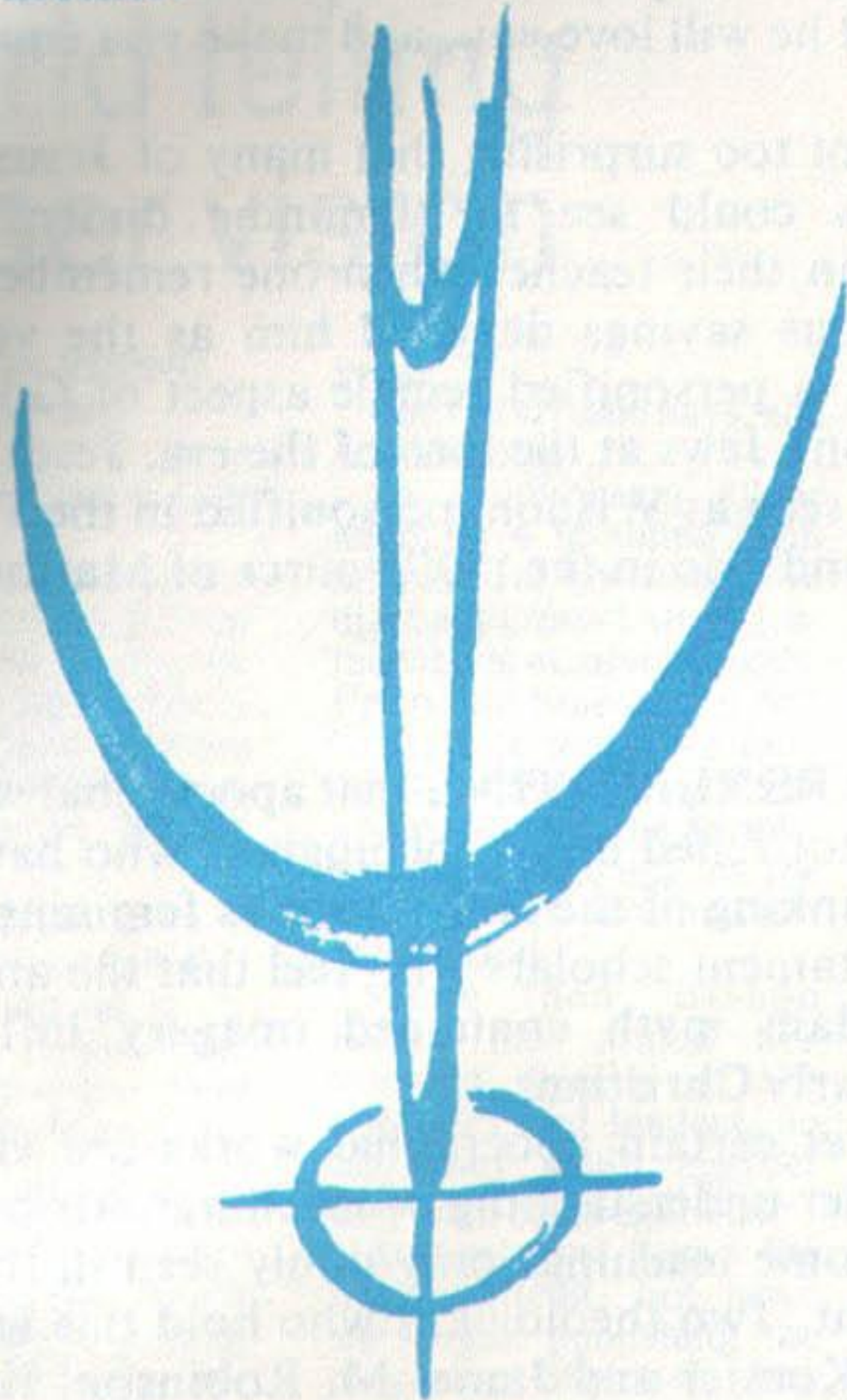
According to Rosemary Radford Ruether, considering the Holy Spirit as feminine makes the female "side" of God subordinate to the dominant image of male divine sovereignty. Even a form of divine androgyny must be questioned, she says, if it assumes that the "highest" symbol of divine sovereignty is exclusively male.

WHAT IF, however, a case could be made that a female Holy Spirit represents an important early teaching of Jesus' followers, later discarded by the forces of orthodoxy when they became victorious? In *The Gnostic Gospels*, (Random House, 1979), Elaine Pagels details the Gnostic-orthodox church clashes that resulted in power for the latter and helped to shape Christianity. She also illustrates the fact that Christians of the second and third centuries could draw on a wide range of feminine imagery for the divine, but she does not try to sort out which of the sources for such imagery are likely authentic Jesus material.

Evangelical theology professor Paul K. Jewett of Fuller Theological Seminary in *The Ordination of Women* (Eerdmans, 1980) dismisses the significance of two texts indicating a belief in the Holy Spirit as a mother figure. He claims that the Gospel of the Hebrews and the Acts of Thomas, two apocryphal works, "are late second or even third century documents, belonging to the rubric of romance rather than history."

The Gospel of the Hebrews is known only through quotations from it given in the writing of early church fathers. In one such, a feminine Holy Spirit, descending upon Jesus at his baptism, says: "My Son, in all the prophets was I waiting for you

that you should come and I might rest in you." Another quote, this time from Jesus: "Even so did my mother, the Holy Spirit, take me by one of my hairs and carry me away to the great mountain Tabor." The Acts of Thomas, a legendary account of the apostle Thomas's travels to India, contains prayers invoking the Holy Spirit as, among other titles, "the Mother of all creation" and "compassionate mother."



morse

In dismissing the feminine Holy Spirit as an idea present only in "obscure and heretical sects on the periphery of the Christian church," Jewett had relied on research that did not take into account the 1945 discovery near Nag Hammadi, Egypt, of some 50 ancient texts. Subsequent translations and studies of these Coptic manuscripts, translated from the Greek in the fourth century, revealed the views of Gnostic Christians from the second century onward. In addition, there are elements which some scholars say are non-Gnostic Christian thought from the first century.

The best-known find was the Gospel of Thomas, a collection of 114 sayings attributed to Jesus. In one of them, Jesus declares that his disciples must hate their earthly parents (as in Luke 14:26) but love the Father and the Mother as he does, "for my mother [gave me falsehood], but [my] true [Mother] gave me life."

Another Nag Hammadi discovery is the Secret Book of James, in which Jesus refers to himself as "the son of the Holy Spirit." The Gospel of

Thomas, the Secret Book of James, and the Gospel of the Hebrews have such close affinities that most scholars assume the maternal Holy Spirit is meant in all three texts, even though it is perfectly clear only in the Gospel of the Hebrews.

But what about dates? Harvard's Helmut Koester, one of the principal interpreters of the Gospel of Thomas, believes that it was composed at about the same time as the biblical Gospels. Ron Cameron of Wesleyan University agrees. In *The Other Gospels*, a collection of 16 apocryphal Gospels (Westminster, 1982), he also dates the Gospel of the Hebrews as circa 100 A.D. or earlier, and the Secret Book of James in the first half of the second century. However, he says, all three could have been written as early as the middle of the first century (about the time of Paul).

To Rosemary Ruether, the evidence assembled in recent times makes it difficult to conclude that female imagery for the Spirit is a late deviation of heretical Christianity. "Rather, we should see an earlier Christianity, which used such female imagery, gradually being marginalized by a victorious Greco-Roman Christianity that repressed it," she says. Her conclusion is that Gnostic Christians merely expanded on traditions once shared widely.

Even so, Ruether balks at claiming a historical precedent that might perpetuate a lesser status in Christianity for the female divine dimension. Nevertheless, one teaching attributed to Jesus might challenge any thoughts that God the Father is much more important than the Holy Spirit. The synoptic Gospels all have a version of the saying, admittedly mysterious, that no blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is ever forgiven, unlike sins or blasphemies against sons of men (Mark) or the Son of Man (Matthew and Luke). Thomas 44 says it more strongly: blasphemies against Father and Son will be pardoned, but those against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven on earth or in heaven.

HOWEVER, even such a "high view" of the Holy Spirit still leaves the gender of the Trinity two against one. This would not be the case if the Son preached androgyny as the spiritual ideal and his followers believed Jesus was the embodiment of that ideal. Again, some of the apocryphal writings attest to this idea. And Paul's letters suggest that it was an early one.

Writing in a 1974 issue of *History of Religions*, Wayne Meeks of Yale University Divinity School proposed that congregations founded by Paul used a baptism ritual which reunified the male and female in each new believer. The key verses are in Galatians, the much-quoted 3:27-28: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Meeks wrote:

The symbolization of a reunified mankind was not just pious talk in early Christianity, but a quite important way of conceptualizing and dramatizing the Christians' awareness of their peculiar relationship to the larger societies around them. At least some of the early Christian groups thought of themselves as a new genus of mankind, or as the restored original mankind.

According to Meeks, the Christian baptismal initiation reversed the division of male and female, returning to the gender unity found in Adam before Eve and in God. Paul also uses reunification language in I Corinthians and Colossians, but without specific reference to male and female. Meeks contended that the androgynous concept received expanded—even "luxuriant"—treatment from Gnostic Christians, some of whom developed the sacrament of the bridegroom chamber to reunite the two halves in the believer. (In the Second Epistle of Clement, a second century sermon, appears a saying not inconsistent with Galatians 3:28: "When the Lord himself was asked by someone when his kingdom would come, he said, 'When the two

For some early Christians, the baptismal initiation reversed the division of male and female, returning to the gender unity found in Adam.

become one, and the outside as the inside and the male with the female neither male nor female.'")

Meeks said that he suspected Paul did not always accept the androgynous interpretation of the baptismal formula, and that he probably did not coin it. Further, Meeks argued, it proved too dangerously ambivalent for the emerging church and "faded into innocuous metaphor, perhaps to await the coming of its proper moment." And Hans Dieter Betz, of the University of Chicago Divinity School, agreed with Meeks that "this doctrine of an androgynous nature of the redeemed Christian seems to be pre-Pauline."

That rite's imagery can be linked with the imagery of Jesus as the reappearing Primal Man, the androgynous *Anthropos*, or, as Paul expressed it, the "Last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45). Paul does not bring up questions of androgyny. Nonetheless, Betz leaned cautiously toward the understanding that the androgynous anthropos myth lies behind the Galatians 3:28 teaching of the dissolution of sexual distinctions. Being baptized into a new, androgy-

nous person would be a form of "imitation of Christ," he said.

Such an imitation, the desire of the disciple to emulate the teacher, would be natural. Also, Jesus urged his followers to become his equal—Luke 6:40, the Gospel of Thomas 13, 108, and in the Secret Book of James. "Make yourselves like the son of the Holy Spirit," Jesus says in the latter text; and again, "If you...do his [the Father's] will, I [say] that he will love you, and make you equal with me."

It is not too surprising that many of Jesus' early followers could see the feminine dimension of divinity in their teacher when one remembers that some Jesus sayings depicted him as the voice of Wisdom, a personified female aspect of God popular among Jews at the turn of the era. Jesus is particularly seen as Wisdom personified in the Thomas sayings and also in the "Q" source of Matthew and Luke.

IT BEARS REPEATING that apocryphal writings were not relied on by theologians who have proposed thinking of the Holy Spirit as feminine, or by New Testament scholars who feel that the androgynous Adam myth contained imagery influential among early Christians.

And yet certain apocryphal works are valuable for a fuller understanding of teachings attributed to Jesus—some teachings only dimly seen in the New Testament. Two theologians who hold this view are Helmut Koester and James M. Robinson. Koester, in a 1980 *Harvard Theological Review* article, said of examples from five apocryphal gospels: "They are significant witnesses for the formation of the gospel literature.... The term apocryphal with all its negative connotations should not prejudice us any longer."

Robinson, in his address as outgoing president of the Society of Biblical Literature in December 1981, presented a detailed case for the argument that the earliest resurrection traditions were luminous appearances of Jesus, while stories of physical resurrection were secondary. Adducing his points from both canonical and noncanonical sources, he said that what long ago became known as heresy was sometimes a relatively valid claim rooted in an original Christian emphasis. Suggesting in an interview that the contemporary ecumenical mood be extended back to the "losers" of the early centuries, the Gnostic Christians, he concluded: "I would hope we could open minds to a big hunk of early Christianity and rethink our conceptions of what was 'heresy' and 'orthodoxy.'" ■

Is Holy Spirit female?

Woman tours world telling of her vision

BY SHARON YOUNG
Times Staff

The Holy Spirit is a woman, says Bishop Lois Roden.

A feminist, as far as the Bible is concerned, Bishop Roden has been touring the world explaining her belief that the Godhead is made up of three—The Father, The Son and the Mother figure.

"It's so simple even a child can understand it," she said during an interview with the Times. "The thing is, theologians have made it complicated by restricting information."

Evidence of her claims, she says, is in Genesis five, verses one and two, which says that in the beginning God made man in the image of male and female and called their name Adam. Roden stresses the "their" as she reads it.

"Few people take notice that there were two Adams — a male and a female. This creation story is the basis of my doctrine," she maintains.

Supporting her claim that the Holy Spirit is indeed a female, she skillfully recites a number of passages from the Bible.

Since 1977, the 65-year-old mother has represented the Living Waters Foundation, an interdenominational church that has thousands of members world-wide.

Prior to 1973, she began teaching the belief that the Holy Spirit was feminine, but gave up, discouraged.

"I had so much opposition that I decided to stop talking about it," she recalled. "Rejection and controversy were occurring more and more in my own congregation. I felt it would be better not to cause so much contro-

versy."

But in 1977, she says, she saw a vision.

"A shimmering silver angel in a feminine form appeared at my window. In the background were just thousands of silver angels. From that time on, I didn't hesitate to teach the femininity of the Holy spirit. It had confirmed the script I had been teaching in the Bible about the motherhood of God."

Since then, Bishop Roden has aimed her teaching directly at the ministers and leaders, so that they could instruct their own congregations.

At first, she found the work difficult, but since she began publishing the magazine Shekinah, she has had a vehicle to entertain the views of scholars, researchers, theologians, media representatives, and archaeologists.

Through Shekinah, a flood of information has come in to verify her teachings, she says.

With the recent elevated position of the female image, she maintains that now is the perfect time to reveal the truth. She notes that the Pope has been negative about the feminine Holy Spirit, but adds, "God has news for the Pope".

When the Pope makes his visit to the United States this year, Bishop Roden is expecting to have a discussion with him on this issue. She maintains that the church must progress with the times and new evidence that is being introduced.

"The name of God to a small child is mother. Even John Paul II said it," she said.

During her stay in the city, bishop Roden ad-



Lois Roden, bishop of the Living Waters Foundation, travels around the world publicizing her contention that the Holy Spirit is one-third female. She was in Oshawa last week as part of her travels, and said in an interview that theologians have obscured for centuries the Biblical references to the female nature of the Holy Spirit.

Times photo

'A special gift': women ministers increasing rapidly....

Waco Tribune-Herald

Sunday, April 17, 1983

By CHARLES AUSTIN

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NEW YORK — The Rev. Carol Matteson Cox feels a dual responsibility as she steps into the pulpit of Fordham United Methodist Church in New York City each Sunday. Like all members of the clergy, she hopes her words will comfort and inspire her parishioners. But as one of the rapidly growing number of ministers who are women, she also knows that her work is shaping the way lay people view such ministers.

Most major religious denominations in the United States have been ordaining women to the ministry for 15 years or more, but in the last four years the number of ministers who are women has risen sharply. And recent studies have found that most parishioners and denominational leaders consider the women effective at their work.

"Clergywomen know that we represented a problem to the church in some ways," Mrs. Cox said. "But now we are hearing that we are a special gift to the church and getting strong support from our bishops and others."

Two years ago, the United Methodist Church became the first American denomination to elect a woman as bishop. Next year, Mrs. Cox is scheduled to be the first woman to be the regular preacher on the "Protestant Hour," a nationally syndicated radio program.

The Rabbinical Association, the na-

tional organization for Conservative Jewish rabbis, is planning to vote soon on admitting a woman, a move that would give the association's endorsement to women as rabbis. The Reformed branch of American Judaism admits women to the rabbinate, but the Rabbinical Association has put off a decision until this year's meeting.

Orthodox Judaism does not accept women rabbis and is not likely to.

About half the Protestant denominations in the United States admit women to the ministry. While there is some support among Roman Catholics in the United States for ordaining women to the priesthood, the Vatican has repeatedly said that Catholic theology rejects the idea.

Five years ago no more than 4 percent of the ministers in denominations that ordained women to the ministry were women, according to statistics collected by the National Council of Churches. That percentage may have doubled in the past four years, said the Rev. Constant H. Jacquet, who collects statistics for the council.

The American Lutheran Church, which agreed to ordain women in 1968, had 18 ordained women five years ago and now has 93. The number of ordained women in the United Methodist Church grew from 300 in 1977 to nearly 1,500 last year, said Kathy Nickerson of the church's Division of Ordained Ministries. The United Presbyterian Church, which has about 15,000 mem-

bers of the clergy, has 776 ordained women at the end of 1981, more than twice as many as it reported in 1977.

Other denominations report similar increases. Figures collected by the Association of Theological Schools indicate that 23 percent of all the seminarians now studying for the ministry are women. "In some denominations, there are more women than men in seminary," said Dr. Marvin J. Taylor, an official of the association.

For a time ordained women had difficulty being accepted into local congregations and often had to seek work as college chaplains or in church institutions. That is no longer the case, church officials report. For example, about 200 of the 261 ordained women in the Lutheran Church in America are working as full-time ministers or assistant ministers, and a recent survey found that only about 10 percent of the Lutherans polled would object to having a woman as their minister, according to the Rev. George Keck. More than half the United Presbyterian's ordained women are working full time in congregations.

In addition to its woman bishop, Marjorie Matthews of Wisconsin, the United Methodist Church has nine ordained women as district superintendents, or regional leaders. Six more women will become district superintendents this year, Miss Nickerson said.

Is Holy Spirit female?

(Continued from page 9)

dressed the Living Waters Oshawa Branch, which is represented by Gladys Otoman. Her summer itinerary includes trips to the Philippines.

These days her teaching are made easier, as a growing number of people are beginning to accept her idea of God as mother, in addition to the old view of

God as a Father.

To help in spreading the word, commercial groups have picked up on the idea by developing bumper

stickers, buttons and T-shirts. They read: "Pray to God, She will hear you"; "When God made man, She was only kidding"; or "Trust in God, She will

provide."

"All this makes all the opposition and embarrassment worthwhile," she says adding, "The truth will come out."

BROTHER SWAGGART, HERE'S MY QUESTION

QUESTION:

IS IT SCRIPTURAL FOR A WOMAN TO BE A PREACHER?

ANSWER:

Yes, it is scriptural for a woman (or anyone whom God may call) to be a minister of the Gospel. But there needs to be some clarification on the matter.

First of all, God can call whomever He desires to preach His Gospel. The color of a person's skin, the sex (either male or female), background — none of these things matter. Neither does it matter what vocation one may have been in prior to the time he or she was saved. Secondly, God would never violate His Word, and there is nothing in His Word that would hinder any of the above-noted characteristics from being used of God in ministry.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT WOMEN PREACHERS?

Even though it is perfectly proper and scriptural for a woman to be a preacher of the Gospel, there are certain limitations I feel must be imposed upon this calling.

A woman can be a missionary, a Sunday School teacher, an evangelist, a pastor, or serve in any calling for that matter that God would bestow upon a man. But I would be remiss if I didn't recognize the limitations that should be adhered to in such cases. To fail to acknowledge those limitations could cause an imbalance in the plan of God with ensuing difficulties and problems within the body of Christ.

LET'S LOOK A LITTLE FURTHER

I believe it is in God's divine order and plan for the man to be the head of the family—and to be the head of God's work on earth. In Genesis 1:26 God tells us how that man was made and how that he was to be given dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and so forth. Then God provided men wives to be help meets (Genesis 2:18). And in Genesis 3:16 the statement is made, "... and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over

thee," implying (perhaps) that Eve had learned her lesson and would consider Adam in her future decisions and actions.

If you will notice in Genesis 3:6-9, even though it was Eve who failed and suffered the terrible consequences (which also included her husband and all future mankind as well), it was Adam to whom God called for an accounting; not Eve. God called the person that was in charge, and that was Adam.

THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

There is a strong push in the United States (and possibly Canada) to circumvent and disallow the laws that God gave in the very beginning and which are still valid today. These efforts, fostered by the feminist movement, to put woman in a position that God never intended for her, will cause serious psychological problems for those women lending their support to such actions. Great hurt can be done to the family and human race in general.

This is not meant to say that the woman is not to have rights (just as the man has rights) or to imply that God intended that the woman be a lesser creature. Actually, it has been said that God made Eve from Adam's side (Genesis 2:21-24) for a specific reason — not from man's head to be lorded over or from his feet to be trampled upon, but from his side to be equal with him, from under his arm to be protected by him, and from near his heart to be loved by him. That is a beautiful and appropriate analysis of woman's place with man. No efforts to circumvent the plan of God regarding the distinctive roles of men and women today can ever come to a fruitful conclusion. Such will always bring the difficulty, sorrow, and heartache that accompany the opposing of God's plan for the human race.

NOW LET'S ONCE AGAIN TURN OUR ATTENTION TO WOMEN PREACHING THE GOSPEL

Paul said in 1 Timothy 2:12, "*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*"

The key to this Scripture are the two words "usurp authority." It's not wrong for a woman to teach; if it were, it would be wrong for her to teach

HERE'S MY QUESTION

even little children of kindergarten or elementary school age in Sunday School.

I feel it is perfectly proper for a woman to teach children even into the teen years. Qualified women do an excellent job, possibly much of the time even better than men would do. I also feel it is proper for women to teach adult Sunday School classes *providing* there are no men available who are capable of teaching them. Likewise, I see nothing wrong in women evangelizing, pastoring, or performing any of these ministries, and God can certainly call them to do so; once again, *providing* there are no men available capable of occupying the position.

In a local church where there are qualified men to teach adult Sunday School classes attended by men as well as women, I feel the church would be stronger if men filled these positions. Of course, it is perfectly proper and acceptable in all churches (or anywhere actually) for a woman to teach a Ladies Bible Class.

When it comes to pastoring a church, once again I feel that in some areas of the country where there would not be a man available to do the job, a woman could certainly fill that position. However, a man who has the touch of God on his life (in any area of the nation, or anywhere in the world) ought to occupy the position of leadership. I think this is God's way.

There are some few women serving as evangelists. Actually, the church that I am ordained with has a few women preachers. And while I respect and love them, at the same time (I am positive I will receive some criticism for what I am about to say), I feel that it is not in God's best order of events for a woman to serve as an evangelist. When a woman puts herself in a position such as this, I feel she is in some ways usurping authority over the man. Now in some parts of the world it could well be that God would not have a man to fill the role. In that case, a woman could step right in and do it with tremendous results and, we believe, the blessings of God.

Whenever a woman occupies a position of leadership in the work of God when there are qualified men that could assume the role — I would not say it is wrong, or sinful, or disobedient to God, but I will say that I feel the work of God is weakened considerably by this position being taken.

I think if one would read the second chapter of 1 Timothy, verses eleven through fifteen, this would be understood. The ideal situation in the work of God is for the man to be the preacher of the Gospel and his wife to help him in the various functions of the church. I believe this is God's way, and when that order is reversed, it does not make for a healthy situation.

Not only is this true in the work of God, but whenever you see a woman that is the strong, dominant personality in the family, you will find a family that is weakened considerably. Admittedly, there are many families where the woman has no choice but to be the leader — simply because her husband chooses not to fill the role. This could be because of personality or lack of authority or leadership ability. In cases like this, God will help that woman in her efforts to provide a Christian home. But this does not negate the ideal situation that God has outlined in His Word.

NOW I REALIZE THERE ARE MANY WHO TEACH IT IS NEVER CORRECT FOR A WOMAN TO PREACH, TEACH, OR SO FORTH

Even in the passage we have just discussed (1 Timothy 2:11-15), the key is subjection. Paul is endeavoring to teach in his letter to Timothy that the woman is to be in subjection to her husband.

We read in 1 Corinthians 14:34, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law," and some would take this to mean it is not even proper for a woman to talk in the church. Of course, to take that Scripture and interpret it in this manner would mean that a woman is not permitted to sing, teach the children, lead the choir (or even sing in it), or anything having to do with talking because the Scripture says keep silence in the churches. But, actually, what is meant by that Scripture is this:

Seating arrangements were somewhat different in the meeting places of the early church than ours are today, where everyone comes in and sits together, many times, in family units. In those days the women were seated on one side of the church and the men on the other. One thing we must remember is that many things were taking place that were totally new to them. The New Covenant, for example, was just coming into force. Actually, *everything* was basically new and, consequently, much instruction was needed.

In view of all the "newness," many things were happening in the services that were not understood by all present, especially the women. (You must remember, women were not afforded the degree of education they are today nor the access to the world outside their homes and families.) The very fact that so few people understood the gifts of the Spirit operating in the church is the basic reason the Apostle Paul wrote 1 Corinthians.

Oftentimes the women would call out in the

HERE'S MY QUESTION

service to their husbands seated across the building and ask what was meant by certain things that were being done or said. Naturally, this created disturbance and difficulty in the order of the services. So the Apostle Paul was emphasizing here that the women should not be so bold and take so much liberty; that she should remember she is under obedience. He continued on in the 35th verse to admonish them to ask their husbands at home if they failed to understand things said or done in the services. They should not disturb the service by asking across the room, but they should wait until they got home. Paul went on to tell them it was a shame for them to disturb the service in this manner.

Paul's statement did not contradict the fact that women were free to pray and prophesy in the church (1 Corinthians 11:5-13; Acts 2:16-21, 21:9; Joe 2:28-32).

GOD'S ORDER OF EVENTS

God has always used women (just as He has men), but He has used them within the order outlined in His Word.

You must remember, too, these instances where God chose men: (1) to head up the twelve tribes of Israel, (2) to be His twelve disciples, (3) to lead the early church.

But we also must not forget that it was a woman who first preached the Gospel (Good News) under the New Covenant. Of course when we speak of this woman telling the Good News, we are speaking of her pastoring a church or any position of that nature. Rather, we're referring to the fact that Mary Magdalene, when she found that Jesus Christ was no longer dead but had actually risen from the dead, told the news first — as is recorded in Mark 16:10-11.

Everyone in the world — whether male or female and irrespective of race, color, or creed — should be a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone should be involved in the work of God. But I believe the order of events, with respect to leadership, that God laid down in both Old and New Testaments should be adhered to. When it is carried forth in this manner, God's work will be healthier, and greater results will be accrued as a result of our collective efforts to do that which He desires.

I trust I have answered your question satisfactorily, and may God bless you richly.



Top Bible scholars believe...

By **BOB BORINO**

GOD'S A WOMAN

MORE and more religious thinkers are becoming convinced that God is a woman — and a controversial Catholic priest has vowed to spend \$110,000 to find out how many Americans agree with them.

"The notion that God is a female isn't a new concept at all," declares Dr. Phillip Boyer, a former professor of theology at Southern Illinois University now living in Miami, Florida. "In fact, many ancient cultures, including the early Christian Gnostics, considered God to be a female."

Incredibly, the same view is sweeping America like wildfire. And Father Andrew Greeley, a Chicago priest and sociologist, wants to know how many of us are swinging back to the belief that God is a woman.

In fact, Greeley has dedicated royalties from 80 of his books to have the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago interview 8,000 men and women to determine the gender of "their" God.

"Our view of God is constantly changing," he declares. "In the early days of the Church, and as late as the Middle Ages, most Christians spoke of God as a mother, sister or nurse."

In fact, Greeley says he's always pictured God as a mother — and a tender, affectionate lover.

"But that image is what the New Testament is all about."

Greeley says God took on masculine characteristics largely due to paintings and statues by artists like Leonardo DaVinci, Raphael and Michelangelo.

But the powerful feminist movement has changed all that — and that's just fine with him.

"There are strong, posi-

And now a priest is out to prove it

tive benefits for the spiritual lives of young men particularly in imagining God as feminine," he declares.

Walter Capps, a religious studies professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara, agrees that the notion of woman as a deity is central to Christian thought.

"The female deity need not be identified simply as the mother of Christ," he says, "but also as mother of the Trinity."

But that's nothing. Other leading scholars point out that many religions picture God as both male and female. Ninian Smart, a professor of religious studies at the University of California, explains:

"Hindus believe that Shiva, who is the god of destruction and reproduction, and Shakti, his wife and counterpart, are simply conflicting parts — of a single god."

• IS GOD male or female? Tell us what you think — and why. Write: DIVINITY c/o GLOBE, 2112 South Congress Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33406. We'll pay \$5 for each letter we publish.

Los Angeles Times

Saturday, April 30, 1983

Feminist Embraces Church, Change

Works for Inclusion of Women in the Shaping of Theology

By CONNIE KOENENN

Changes of a radical nature are being brought about in the Christian church by women who are entering divinity schools in unprecedented numbers and producing an avalanche of new scholarship that rejects the role of women as subordinate in the faith.

And although most church segments still appear resistant or reluctant to such changes, this is nevertheless a "very important transformation," said Rosemary Radford Ruether, a feminist with a prophetic bite who at 46 is already a matriarch in the movement.

A Catholic who teaches in a Protestant seminary, Ruether remains the leader among feminists who have not given up on the church but who also see the need for a feminist theology that attempts to rediscover women's contributions to religious history. She shows no signs of softening the rationale for feminist theology.

In a recent talk at Pacific Unitarian Church in Palos Verdes, she said: "For 2,000 years, women have been largely excluded from the shaping of Christian theology. This has meant exclusion from advanced theological education, teaching of theology and from the ministry and preaching."

As women began to examine these traditions intensely over the last decade in the light of other women's issues, they became aware of an inherent sexism, she said.

"Theology was not only shaped without women, it was shaped *against* women, to define them as less intelligent, as less moral, as less human than men," Ruether said. "This attitude has been used to justify the exclusion of women from the public culture in general."

In Demand as Speaker

Having written or edited 15 books and scores of articles on the subject, Ruether is in demand as a speaker throughout the country. She finds, she said in an interview before her Palos Verdes address, that she can drop in to "Des Moines, or wherever, and find some little group of people who have read my stuff."

A blunt, energetic speaker, she tends to play down her own role in what some people see as a revolution. But her influence is widely acknowledged. Theologians Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, authors of the 1979 book "Womanspirit Rising," give a sample testimony in their introduction:

"When we began graduate work in theology at Yale in the late 1960s, we were taught nothing about feminists or even feminine theology. When Rosemary Ruether came to speak at Yale in the spring of 1979, her presence seemed almost miraculous. . . . We have

never heard an articulate woman set out the problems that a purely male perspective had visited on Western theology and culture."

Ruether described the feminist effort to overcome the patriarchal bias in modern religion this way: "Our goal is to make Christianity less masculine. That's not in the sense of men being a group of demonic folk, but that the ministry itself has become a symbol for people utilizing power instead of just gathering together."

'A Feminine Consciousness'

She sees a "whole revolution in human relationships" gradually unfolding. "A certain number of women today are coming into the ministry with a feminine consciousness and a different model of minister-laity relationship from the 'I speak, you listen' concept."

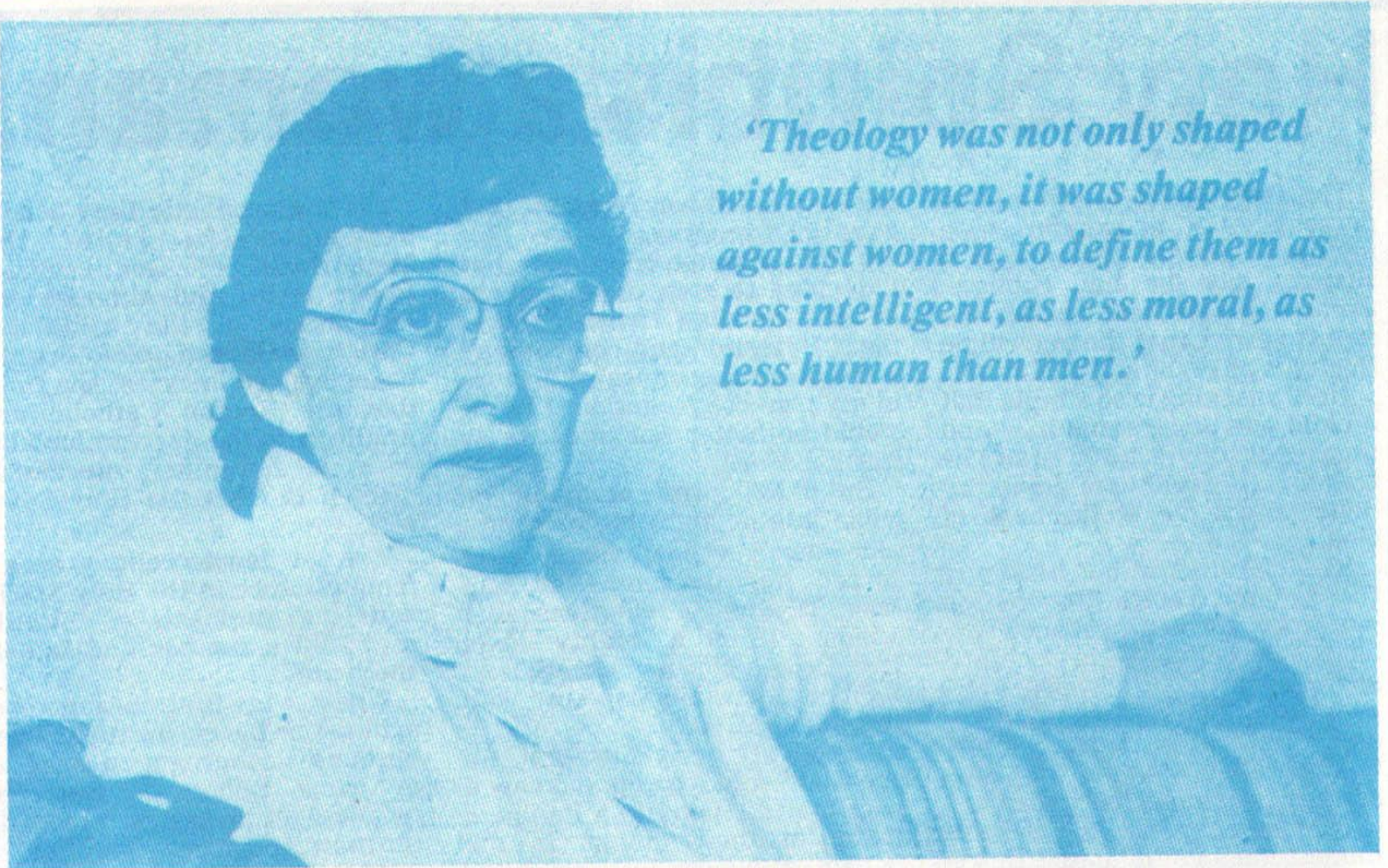
Ruether began rejecting such a concept in the early 1960s, when she began writing criticism of Catholic birth control policy. A Californian who spent much of her childhood in La Jolla, she received her bachelor's degree (religion and philosophy), master's degree (ancient history) and doctorate (classics and patristics) from the Claremont Colleges and her first consciousness-raising from the civil rights movement.

"I was an undergraduate from 1954 to 1958, when no one was thinking about anything at all," she said. "Then when I was in graduate school, I worked with the Delta Ministry during one summer in Mississippi. Then the Watts riots broke out (in Los Angeles), and we thought we'd better go home and deal with the problems there."

Her first job was at Immaculate Heart College in Hollywood, now closed. Later she taught for 10 years at Howard University in Washington, D.C., then at Harvard Divinity School and Yale Divinity School. Since 1976 she has held an endowed teaching chair at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill.

She and her husband, Herman Ruether, also a professor, have three college-age children. A tireless writer and contributing editor to "Christianity and Crisis," she has influenced the direction of feminist theological thinking with such books as "Mary, the Feminine Face of the Church," "Religion and Sexism," "New Woman/New Earth" and, most recently, "Sexism and God-Talk."

She enjoyed some acclaim during her visit here. Scripps College at Claremont named her distinguished alumna for 1983 and, in acceptance, she delivered an address on "Feminism and Peace" at her class reunion. A measure of her acceptance in Catholic circles was



'Theology was not only shaped without women, it was shaped against women, to define them as less intelligent, as less moral, as less human than men.'

JOSE GALVEZ / Los Angeles Times

Rosemary Radford Ruether

demonstrated this week with the announcement that she has received the 1983 U.S. Catholic Award from U.S. Catholic magazine for "furthering the cause of women in the church."

Ruether is not inclined to join those women who wish to become priests.

"My role is teacher and theologian," she said. "In fact, I reject the clericalizing of all the important roles in the church. I suspect that if one *could* be ordained, the kind of power system that exists—the controls—would limit effectiveness."

If Catholic women cannot get into the system, Protestant women can—and do. "There has been an enormous entrance of women into seminaries in the last 10 years," Ruether said.

"Their presence also has created a strong demand for women on the faculty and feminist courses, which

accounts for the rapid explosion of feminist writing. A feminist curriculum is critical in theological education."

Despite changes in seminary enrollment and curriculum that might seem radical to many, she does not view the future with unabashed optimism. "A lot of white males are going through the theological system and not even being touched by this, except perhaps for the reality of having a lot of women classmates."

Nevertheless, she sees gains as women invade the ministry, that most inviolate center of all the occupations traditionally held by men. "Even for women in the ministry who don't have a big feminist awareness," she said, "just their presence performs a symbol transformation, changing the concept of a male God."

Koenenn is the editor of the Daily Calendar section of The Times. She is working on her master's thesis about women in religion.



Invitation

You are being invited to attend a meeting at Camp Soaring Hawk, in Purdy, Missouri, August 17-21 where we lay aside our denominations and independent affiliations and enjoy each other's companionship and fellowship. Is the Holy Spirit Feminine? Also other topics are on the agenda to be discussed. If you would like to attend just write, UNICO, 3120 W. 40th St., Cleveland, Ohio 44109 and request information concerning the camp.



Holy Spirit is a woman,

The Holy Spirit is a feminine personage — a woman — a mother — insists Bishop Lois I. Roden, and she has Biblical, archeological and historical facts to prove that the masculine theory is an error in translation.

Her reasoning is so simple that a child can understand it — and thousands relate to it — as she travels the world explaining her belief about the Motherhood of God.

Sister Roden, who is bishop of the Living Waters Foundation which she formed in Waco, Texas, is in Brockville this week and spoke over CFJR's "open line" program Monday evening — and, naturally, upset many traditionalists, whom she describes as having closed minds.

Theologians, she says, have made things complicated by restricting information over the years, emphasizing the masculine identity.

Blaming an inexact, incorrect translation of the Bible from the original Hebrew version for the prevalent belief that God is masculine, Sister Roden quotes dozens of passages from the scriptures which prove to her, and followers of her church, that God is female.

Evidence of her claims, she says, is in Genesis five, verses one and two, which says that in the beginning God made man in the image of male and female and called their name Adam. Sister Roden stresses the "their" as she reads the passage.

"Few people take notice that there were two Adams — a male and a female. This creation story is the basis of my doctrine," she maintains.

Sister Roden's late husband was a minister in Waco, Tex. of an interdenominational fellowship, and prior to 1973 she had been teaching the belief that

the Holy Spirit was feminine, but gave up, discouraged.

"I had so much opposition that I decided to stop talking about it," she recalled Tuesday morning. "Rejection and controversy were occurring more and more in my own congregation. I felt it would be better not to cause so much discord."

But in 1977, while studying her Bible late at night in her room, she saw a vision, which reinforced her theories. She had been reading Revelations 18:1 which tells of a mighty angel that comes down to earth and lightens the whole universe with the glory of God.

"Suddenly I felt a presence in the room. I looked up and saw a shimmering angel in a feminine form, in the window. In the background were just thousands of silver angels. I was stunned. I went back to my studies and the vision faded from the window — but it has never faded from my mind's eye," is the way she recalls this revelation.

Sister Roden believes that was a sign for her to continue her teachings. When she was studying Revelations that night, she found that John the Revelator had a vision of a "wonder woman" in Heaven. She had a crown with 12 stars, which is a symbol of government and authority. From Revelations she went on to Galatians 4:16, where it says that Jerusalem "which is above, is the mother of us all, relating the allegory of Hagar and Sarah, Abraham's two wives, who are symbols of two covenants. The old testament is Hagar, and the new testament (the church) is Sarah. So we see the mother image in the heavenly Jerusalem supported by the scriptures. And it is common knowledge that a woman symbolizes the Church," she explains.

"It is a prophetic time now to bring to the front the Motherhood of God," Sister Roden feels. And although she has many of the traditional Christian Church ministers denouncing her theories, she finds that the Roman Catholic and Anglican faiths are comfortable with a feminine intercessor "which is what the Holy Spirit is".

And the Jewish religion sees a female figure in the Holy Spirit, with the emphasis of "family life" and a mother and father, she reminds.

When she first began preaching this belief, the men in her husband's congregation were up in arms about it. But her husband reminded them to study the matter themselves.

"As a result, all came to the same conclusion, and we soon had a worldwide following of many thousands of believers. Whole denominations have embraced this idea — and, when you think about it, it's just common sense," she reminds.

And the opposition is becoming much less, she finds, as scholars agree with her theories. In some instances, Sister Roden claims the true identity of God has been deliberately tampered with by Christians who practice "patriarchal theology", citing some 200 examples of obviously feminine references being changed to masculine. "It's a perfect example of male chauvinism!" she points out.

Most of her support from the Bible comes from the Books of Genesis, Romans, Revelations, Proverbs and Galatians. She aims her teaching directly at ministers and leaders of congregations.

At first she found the work difficult, but since she began publishing the magazine Shekinah (Hebrew for Heavenly

insists Bishop Roden

Mother), she has had a vehicle to entertain the views of scholars, researchers, theologians, media representatives, and archaeologists. Through Shekinah, a flood of information has come in to verify her

teachings, she says.

With the recent elevated position of the female image, she maintains that now is the perfect time to reveal the truth. She hopes to use some of this confirmation when she is granted an

audience with Pope John Paul II when he makes his visit to the United States, to convince him to change his mind on the ordination of women as priests.

She maintains that the church must progress with the times



Bishop Lois I. Roden, of Waco, Texas, left, a firm believer in the Motherhood of God, is seen with her Brockville representative, Beverley

Sabourin, as they look over The Shekinah, the church magazine edited by Sister Roden.

and new evidence that is being introduced. "The name of God to a small child is mother — even the Pope himself said it," she reminds.

The 65-year-old mother of six grown children, Sister Roden travels to Israel two or three times every year and to many other parts of the world. She plans to visit China and Japan in the near future to "launch the gospel of the Holy Spirit Mother." She is looking forward to the reactions of Japanese and Chinese, who, she says, have always recognized the feminine qualities of God.

Sister Roden is currently on a winter visit to Ontario, visiting Toronto, Oshawa and Kingston, as well as Brockville, where she has representatives of the Living Waters Foundation (water, and women being the source of life,

she explains).

Thinking of God as a plural term, both male and female, she says it is the simplest thing in the world to understand and numerous men, as well as women, are seeing the reasoning behind it. Some people are still prejudiced, she realizes, but adds "Prejudice is being down on something you're not up on!"

"Our Christian roots are in Judaism, in which we find the mother image very plain," she points out.

In Brockville, her representative is Bev Sabourin, 23 John Street, and while she is here, Sister Roden may be reached at the Sabourin apartment by phoning 342-0954. She will be glad to discuss her beliefs with any interested callers, she assures readers.

THE RECORDER AND TIMES, Wednesday, February 9, 1983

Swedes Favor Female Clergy

Most of Sweden's top political leaders have declared that they support the ordination of women in the Church of Sweden, reports the *Christian Century*. A weekly church news magazine, *Svensk Kyrkotidning*, recently polled the politicians; all said that Sweden's laws demanding complete equality between the sexes should also apply to the church.

Ola Ullsten, leader of the Liberal Party, said, however, that local circumstances should be taken into account when deciding about the ordination and appointment of a female pastor.

Women have been ordained in the Church of Sweden since 1960 and so there is no barrier to ordination from the hierarchy. Opposition continues to organize, however. Dakanats, separated groups within the church, form to oppose women's ordination and to continue to protest the church's policy.

The Dallas Morning News

Wednesday, April 13, 1983

Jewish group fails to ratify female rabbi's membership

By Brad Bailey
Staff Writer of The News

The Rabbinical Assembly missed adding a line to Jewish history by a mere three votes Tuesday when the international Conservative Jewish group declined to ratify membership for Beverly Magidson, the first woman rabbi to apply for membership.

Of 285 ballots cast during roll-call voting at the Hilton Inn at Central Expressway and Mockingbird Lane, 210 votes favored admitting Rabbi Magidson to the all-male group. There were 75 votes against her membership.

The assembly's rules require 75

percent of the total ballot for admission. Rabbi Magidson won 73.6 percent of the vote.

However, proponents of admitting women to the ruling organization for Jewish clergy viewed the vote as a solid victory. They said it expressed the will of the "vast majority" of Conservative Jewish clergy to include women in their ranks.

Admitting women to the assembly has been an issue since 1972, when a feminist Jewish activist group called Ezrat Nashim attended a Rabbinical Assembly convention to demand a hearing. Rabbi Magidson's application two

years ago was the first submitted by a woman who met all the assembly's qualifications — two years' rabbinical experience, theocratic agreement with the tenets of the assembly, acceptable educational credentials and compatible life style.

Rabbi Arnold Goodman, president of the body and a proponent of female membership, said the vote was not a reflection of Rabbi Magidson's qualifications but was based strictly on her gender.

Goodman described the vote as a "great encouragement. In essence, the majority voted in her favor. Her courage in allowing her-

(See Jewish Group on page 20)

The Denver Post Friday, April 8, 1983

Episcopal Couple Share Co-Rectorship

By JUDY KLEMESRUD
The New York Times

STAATSBURG, N.Y. — Persons who telephone the rectory of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church often ask, "Is Reverend Schlachter there?" And the answer they are likely to get is "Which one?"

There are two Reverend Schlachters serving the 125-year-

ple to share a co-rectorship in the Episcopal Diocese of New York. They also are one of a handful of couples around the nation to share a co-rectorship in the Episcopal Church.

"We've really got a grand experiment here," Melvin Schlachter said in an interview in the living room of the rectory, a 100-year-old blue frame house that sits on a hill

are very enthusiastic about the co-rectorship, which they have held since Nov. 28, 1982.

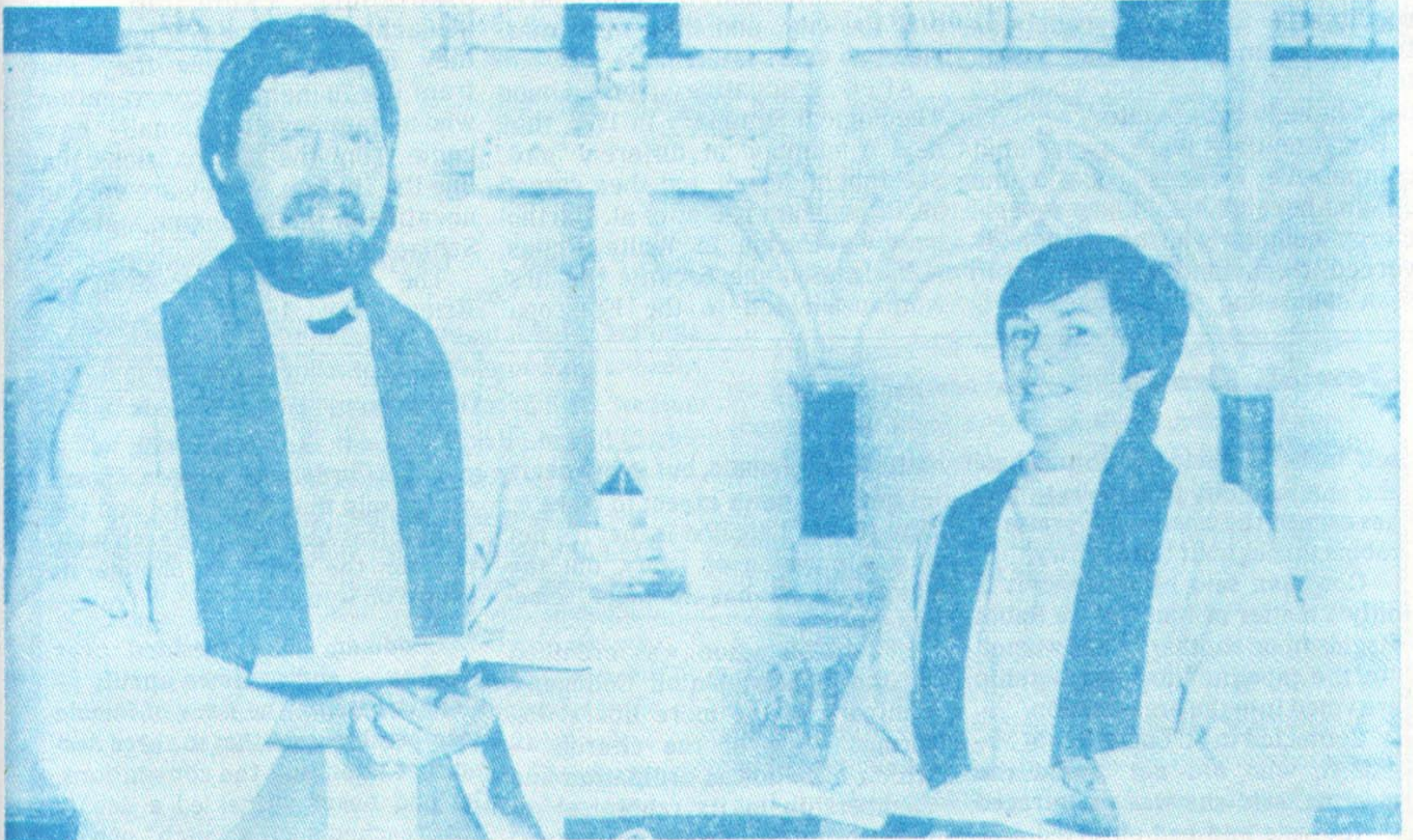
On Sundays they take turns preaching the sermon and celebrating the eucharist, and they alternate leading the monthly vestry meetings. They also take turns preaching on the two most important Christian holidays of the year: Christmas and Easter. Melvin

see it as important to establish ourselves as a team. But I think as we go along, it won't be so important."

Another thing they divide is the rector's salary.

Not everything has gone smoothly since the couple arrived in Staatsburg.

For one thing, one prominent older female member of the parish, who does not believe in the or-



Melvin and Barbara Schlachter stand at altar of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Staatsburg, N.Y.

The New York Times

old parish in this quaint Hudson River community of about 800 persons in Dutchess County. They are Melvin and Barbara Schlachter, both 37 years old, a married couple with two children.

The Schlachters, both graduates of Union Theological Seminary in New York, are the first clergy cou-

overlooking the picturesque stone church.

"Symbolically, when we're both together at the altar," he added, "we're saying something very different about men and women and authority relationships, both in the church and in marriage."

So far, the Schlachters say they

preached this Easter.

"Other things we divide by interest," he said. "Barbara will do educational work with young people, and I'll work with finances and buildings and grounds."

Whenever possible, he said, both rectors take part in weddings, funerals and house visitations. "We

dination of women, has refused to attend any service at which Mrs. Schlachter preaches the sermon or celebrates the eucharist.

"But she is the only person in the six years that I've been ordained who has been so outspoken and acted so boldly," Mrs. Schlachter

(See top of next page)

Episcopal Couple

said. "So I guess it's not so bad."

She added that she thought her status as a wife and mother probably had helped her gain acceptance as co-rector of the parish. "What has saved me from being suspect by both men and women," she said, "is that I'm doing something very traditional — I'm a wife and mother. That, and the fact that my style is not strident."

Another problem the Schlachters have faced is the competitive feelings that sometimes arise over which rector will perform a particular duty. "What I'm finding," Melvin said, "is that the way we've structured the position requires us to be very collaborative, sometimes more than I want to be. Often life is easier when you don't have to collaborate."

Because they were aware that competitive feelings could come up, and because they know several clergy couples who have been divorced, the Schlachters decided to seek counseling. Their counselor is

a Presbyterian clergyman from a nearby community who also does psychotherapy.

"We saw a need before we took the job to have somebody help us make the most of this wonderful experiment in marriage and in work," Melvin Schlachter said.

The Schlachters were both reared in small towns in the Middle West. He is from Hastings, Neb.; she is from Huron, Ohio. Both were student leaders on their respective campuses: he at the University of Nebraska, she at Ohio Wesleyan University. They met in Chicago in 1966 at a YMCA- and YWCA-sponsored convention on the church and the city, and they were married two years later.

After graduating from Union Theological Seminary in 1972, they held a number of different jobs. She taught school and then served as an assistant rector of St. Bartholomew's Parish in White Plains, N.Y. In 1980 she became the first woman elected to the Episcopal

Church's Executive Council, which governs between conventions. He worked as a campus minister, a prison chaplain, a pastoral counselor and an interim pastor.

Why did they decide to accept a co-rectorship? "It was time for me to be a minister," Mrs. Schlachter said. "I had a lot of interviews and found there was still a fair amount of discrimination against women in the ministry. There was always the question of my young children and being married to a priest. They all asked, 'Won't you move across the country with him?'"

Then the co-rectorship in Staatsburg came up. The Schlachters interviewed for it, and they liked the people they met from the 70-member congregation, whose families traditionally have come from the old mansions that line the Hudson. "They are very innovative in their thinking," Melvin Schlachter said.

The Schlachters' children are Erica, 7, and Jacob, 2½.

Jewish Group (Continued from page 18)

self to be subjected to this debate and the publicity is admirable. She has earned the esteem and praise of rabbis throughout the country."

Goodman said he believes it is only a matter of time before Rabbi Magidson or another of the women "in the pipeline" for membership are voted into the organization.

Contacted in St. Louis, Rabbi Magidson, who did not attend the meeting, said she was encouraged by the vote and had expected considerably fewer favorable ballots.

"My backers had told me I should be satisfied if I got as many as 60-65 percent of the vote. So I am vastly encouraged," she said. "I really didn't expect to get in. I was a

little bit optimistic, but in my heart of hearts I didn't expect to make it. The reason I applied is that it's not just a question of *today*, but the long run. It has to start somewhere."

Rabbi Magidson was ordained by the Hebrew Union College, a seminary of the more liberal Reformed wing of the church — which has allowed ordination and membership in its rabbinical organizations for females for several years. She then switched to the Conservative branch of Judaism, practicing as chaplain of the Jewish Hospital of St. Louis.

The Conservative school, the Jewish Theological Seminary, has

not yet ordained women. Some clergy said that the school and the Rabbinical Assembly are each waiting for the other to change its stance on women.

Goodman, who presided over lengthy — and at times unruly — floor debate on the issue of female membership, said that in three decades of attending the conventions, he had never witnessed a debate that reached such a "pitch" or voting so close that a roll-call vote was necessary.

Rabbi Magidson said she is strongly considering submitting her application again at a subsequent convention. ●

THE MAGNA CHARTA OF WOMAN

By Jessie Penn-Lewis

PART 4

3

“Thoroughly Deceived . . . but . . . !”

The third obscure passage in Paul's writings upon which the misinterpretation of Paul's teaching about women is based is 1 Tim. 2:8-15, written *ten years later* than the first Epistle to the Corinthians. It reads as follows in the R.V.:

I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing. In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works. Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion¹ over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being be-

guiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through the childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.

Here again let us remember that there are no punctuation marks in the Greek; and here, too, the historical setting of the words is of very great importance. For apart from historical light upon the circumstances calling forth the language used by the Apostle, it is difficult to get a clear understanding of what he means.

When Paul was arrested and taken to Caesarea for trial, he there appealed unto Caesar and was sent to Rome, where he arrived in A.D. 31, in the seventh year of Nero's reign. He was afterwards allowed to dwell in his own hired house and in time gathered a "church" or "assembly" (Gr.) about him. Paul was well known throughout the Praetorian guard of Nero as a prisoner for Christ, and he sends greeting to the Philippian

1. The word "usurp" (A.V.) is not in the original.

Church from the Christians in the Imperial household of Nero.

The moral state of things which surrounded Paul in Rome at this time can be realized only by reading the history of that period. Nero was "the most infamous potentate that ever disgraced a throne." Tacitus, a pagan historian, writes that "he punished with exquisite torture [the] Christians. . . . Some were covered with skins of wild beasts, and left to be devoured by dogs; others were nailed to the cross, numbers were burnt alive; and many covered over with inflammable matter were lighted up . . . as torches during the night. . . ." All Christians, women and men, were therefore in the greatest peril. Paul was probably in Spain when he heard of the awful martyrdom of the Roman Church in A.D. 64, and it is thought that during a second imprisonment at Rome, and three years after this martyrdom of the Christians, he wrote his first epistle to Timothy in A.D. 67.

The Roman Christian Church not only had to contend with persecution by the imperial authorities, but the opposition of the Jews increased the dangers of the situation. For it seems that the Jews were in favor in Rome at this time because the emperor had married the Jewish proselyte Poppaea, while Christians were in greatest peril. Professor Ramsay says: "If the Jews appeared to the Empire to resemble the Christians so much, and yet were treated so differently, the reason . . . must have lain in those points in which Christians differed from the Jews." And Dr. Bushnell remarks, "At no point was the contrast greater at this time than in the Christian treatment of women." "For," she continues, "there were

four points at any rate in which this difference was manifest: (1) in the *aggressiveness of Christianity*, whilst Judaism was proud, exclusive and unexpansive; (2) in the *instruction of women* as expressly permitted by Paul, whereas the Jewish Oral Law taught that women were only to be instructed in their own special duties . . . (3) in the *many conversions of women*: and (4) in their activity in the Apostolic Church." Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, refers to "the very conspicuous position that female influence assumed in the great work of the conversion of the Roman Empire. In no other movement of thought was it so powerful or so acknowledged. In the ages of persecution female figures occupy many of the foremost places in the ranks of martyrdom, and pagan and Christian writers alike attest the alacrity with which women flocked to the church."

Therefore, writes Dr. Bushnell, "this aggressiveness of Christianity, and activity of Christian women, would not only offend Jews, but the complaint against it, on the part of the Jews, would make a deep impression in time upon the . . . Imperial Government. . . . Every new convert would mean fresh danger for the Church, and the aggravation would be doubled if that convert were the wife of an unbelieving husband, or the daughter of an unbelieving father." Lecky says, too, "another cause of the peculiar animosity felt against the Christians was the constant interference with domestic life, arising from the great number of female conversions. . . ."

It is necessary therefore to bear all this in mind if Paul's words to Timothy concerning the position of women in the church are to be understood. Prof. Sir. W. Ramsay points this out also

when he says, "The advice given by St. Paul as to the relations of the Christians to the society in which they are placed, is *always in accordance with the situation . . . occupied by them under Nero.*"

Now let us read again the passage in 1 Tim. 2:8-15, R.V., and note some points about it, taking them verse by verse.

Verse 8: "*I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and disputing.*" This is quite clear, but now we find a full stop after the word "disputing," and then the English version (R.V.) goes on to say—

Verse 9: "*In like manner, that women adorn themselves,*" etc. But how can women "in like manner" adorn themselves like men? (v. 8). Conybeare and Howson say that "after the word 'women' we must supply 'pray' (as Chrysostom does)," and Prof. Ramsay says, "The necessary and inevitable sense of this word [likewise] is *that the whole body of women is to be understood as affected by what has been said about men.*" In other words, that Paul wishes the women to pray "in every place" as well as the men.

Then follow suitable directions as to how the Christian women should dress, obviously when engaged in public prayer. "In times of peril," Dr. Bushnell observes, it was very reasonable "to advise the most quiet and unobtrusive dress." The deportment of women, again obviously when engaged in public service, is then referred to, but one of the words used by the Apostle is not rendered correctly, either in the A.V. or the R.V. The word in the Greek is to be found again only in Heb. 12:28, in connection with service well pleasing to God; and then it is translated "rever-

ence" or "godly fear" (m.). A question which Christian women might well ask the translators is why they should render this particular Greek word as "shamefacedness" (A.V.) and "shamefastness" (R.V., an obsolete English word) when used in reference to women, and "reverence" or "godly fear" when it refers to the service of all believers to a God who is "consuming fire."

Verse 10: "*But (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works.*" Here, hidden away in the original text, is the very confirmation of women's public work, if Christian women had but known it! Dr. Bushnell says the word "professing" in the original "is derived from two Greek words, the preposition meaning 'upon,' or 'unto,' and [a verb] meaning 'I deliver a message.' The verb is the word from which we get 'angel,' which means a 'messenger.'" The word is also frequently used "in the sense of 'to promise,'" and it often means "to profess to teach." The only other passage in the New Testament where this word [in 1 Tim. 2:10] is translated "profess" is in the same Epistle in chapter 6:21, where Paul says "which some *professing* have erred concerning the faith." On the word in 1 Tim. 6:21, Professor Ramsay says, it "*regularly implies that the person mentioned came before the public, with promises, in order to gain supporters; it is applied to candidates for . . . votes in the Greek cities, who publicly announced what they intended to do . . . if they gained popular support. . . .*"

"If this be the meaning 'regularly implied' by this word," observes Dr. Bushnell, "then why not here where it relates to women? These women

'came before the public to gain supporters,' not for themselves, but to win people to the standard of the Cross, and they promise 'godliness' in place of a sin burdened life to those who will accept their offers."

But Paul has something to say quite distinctively about the woman *learner* in the next verses.

Verses 11 and 12: "*Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness.*" Here let us remember Prof. Ramsay's words that Paul's advice "is always in accordance" with the situation of the Christians under Nero. Read in the light of verses 8-10, with their recognition of woman's public work both in prayer and preaching—"pray everywhere," "proclaiming godliness"—it is obvious, observes Dr. Bushnell, that verses 11 and 12 embody an "exceptional prudential measure to meet a dire necessity of perilous times," and are not contradictory to what the Apostle had just said.

The times were indeed perilous for Christian women. The Jews were bitterly against the teaching of women and angered by the different attitude of Christianity towards them. They might complain to the authorities and bring grave danger upon the whole body of believers. So, writes Dr. Bushnell, the Apostle tells Timothy that "a woman who comes asking to be taught" is "to be allowed to learn, but in quietness" (not "silence" as in A.V.), because of the possible persecution, and such "learners" should be willing to learn "in all subjection."² Also, Paul adds, that (on account of the Neronian peril) he himself did not allow a woman to do the "teaching" at such a time or to "have dominion over a man"—quite a different matter from "praying" and "pro-

claiming" the gospel. Neither was it a permanent prohibition of "teaching" for all time as Dr. Bushnell illustrates in the following way:

"Supposing during the Armenian atrocities, or the Chinese Boxer uprising, because of some special peril to men, to which women were not exposed, a bishop had sent the following advice: 'Let male preachers of the Gospel refrain from teaching women and controlling them, and be in quietness,' could that be justly construed as an interdiction of male preaching *for all time*, if once it were known that at that time special peril to men alone existed? Would not the use of such an expression as 'preachers of the Gospel' lead one to infer that when peace was restored these men would go back to the vocation named? So here; once knowing that special peril for women existed, the use of the expression '*women proclaiming godliness*' would merely indicate this as their normal occupation under normal conditions."

Moreover, Dr. Bushnell rightly observes, "the 'quietness' may be as much enjoined upon the one who is teaching as the one who is learning! It is not to be told abroad by either teacher or learner that the woman is *learning*. But yet the woman is to be allowed to learn. That was a step far in advance of the practice of the Jews."

Now follows one of the most glorious messages from God to women to be found in the whole Bible but hidden from them, alas, for centuries, under mountains high of the misinterpretation of expositors. Let us dig out this "evangel," and see how it flashes with light from heaven.

The Apostle had just said, "*Let a woman learn . . .*" and then he goes on to give Timothy the reason why. His mind goes back to Eden,

2. See meaning of this word on page 75.

and he remembers how Eve through her innocence and immaturity had fallen a victim to the wiles of the devil and had become "thoroughly deceived" (lit. Greek), so he writes as follows—

Verses 13, 14 and 15: "*For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through the childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.*" The word rendered "formed" here, points out Dr. Bushnell, is not the word used for "create." The Greek Lexicon says that its meaning is "to mould, form, shape." "The lesson Paul would draw from his reference to the beginning of the race is, that as Adam was first developed, and then Eve, in the natural world, so must it be in the social world." Adam "having been first formed, and hence being older than Eve, was not deceived." "Adam was not beguiled," said the Apostle. He sinned with his eyes open. But the woman was "*thoroughly deceived.*" The one was a victim, the other a deliberate sinner.

Paul remembers the primeval promise that the woman's Seed should bruise the serpent's head. The victim of the serpent's wiles was dealt with in abounding grace and promised the honor of becoming the progenitor of a Saviour who would eventually destroy the serpent's power. She was saved *then*, through faith in a coming Saviour. How much more should she not be saved now, reasons the Apostle, when that Saviour had already come! And so he sets forth what may truly be described as the Magna Charta of womanhood. Yes, the woman in Eden was thoroughly deceived: but she shall be saved through the childbearing (of Jesus Christ) (cf. Gal. 4:4)! The childbear-

ing—the great event of the world having its culmination at Calvary. The promise is clear. The woman "shall be saved" to the very full of all that the incarnation and death of the Son of God obtained for her. Woman is not for all time to remain under the shadow of Eve's "deception" any more than is the man to remain for all time under the shadow of Adam's willful sin. The woman *shall be saved*; therefore, Timothy, "*let the woman learn. . .*" and learn of her redemption from the Fall in the birth of the Saviour.

Ah, here we have the key to Satan's endeavor to fasten upon all women down the ages the results of his work in Eden. "The woman must not learn," said the Jews in Paul's time, and "the woman must not learn," said many of the theologians of the Christian Church, influenced by Judaism. "She was thoroughly deceived once," whispered the serpent, who, alas, has since extended his operations and thoroughly deceived the whole inhabited earth (Rev. 12:9). "See how the woman leads in all kinds of heretical movements today," cry some. "Is it not a proof that she is open to deception as much as she was in Eden?" Yes, it is undoubtedly true that on account of her greater spiritual capacity, the woman is more open to deception in the supernatural sphere just as men are more open to be thoroughly deceived in the intellectual realm. But is it not probable that women are being swept into the wiles of the devil today because the truths of God which they should have learned have been kept from them? Is it not because for centuries past they have not been given *the training in the Scriptures* which would have saved them and prepared them for the day of emancipation? Had the woman been encouraged to "learn" as the Apostle advised

Timothy, might not her greater spiritual capacity have resulted in an accession of spiritual force to the church, which would have saved it from the deadly deception of the "Higher Criticism"?

Verse 15: *"But she shall be saved through the childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety."*

The "if" here is important, for it gives the conditions on the woman's part for the personal realization of the promised salvation. The words cover a wide scope in their meaning. "Faith" in the Saviour, the "love" life of His indwelling, the "sanctification" of spirit, soul and body, which is the accompanying result of His salvation and, in the practical life, the "self-restraint" (the meaning of the Greek word translated "sobriety"), which is the outcome of recognizing that the "body" is the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 19, 20).

Dr. Bushnell points out also that this "salva-

tion" is not only spiritual but social. Paul implies, she says, "that woman's social rescue began in the birth of Jesus Christ," and "Christianity unhampered by the narrowness of man" purposed to "raise woman until she stands on his level." *"She shall be saved through the childbearing [of Jesus Christ]."* This is the woman's evangel and her message of hope to counter all the effects of the Fall in Eden. Is it not strange that any other meaning than their being the New Testament complement to the Gen. 3: 15 promise should ever have been given to the words?³ But woman's emancipation day has come. Centuries of ignorance of the things of God have left their marks upon her; but women may "learn" at last, and men, too, will learn by the stern logic of experience that it has been a perilous policy for the Christian Church to have given a lower status to woman than that which was hers by right through the atoning work of the Son of God.

3. We thankfully note that the R.V. gives Gal. 4:4 as the marginal reference attached to these words.



what the people are saying



Thank you for your letter and news of the tragedy at headquarters near Axtell was destroyed by fire. I express my deep sympathy and send a small donation for restoration.

**John Simonaitis
Bendigo, Australia**

I am very interested in your cover story of Shekinah, Jan-Mar '82, Volume 3, Number 1 entitled "The Discovery of Genesis (How the truths of Genesis were found Hidden in the Chinese Language)." Please give me an address where I may purchase this book and any others on the

subject. Thank you,

**Charles FitzGerald
Murfreesboro, Tennessee**

I am appalled to hear of your recent fire. I enclose a small cheque to help, and trust that you will receive a great response. Please continue to send "Shekinah."

**Brian Williams
England**

With thanks to God that you can continue to publish. Bless you all in continual progress in this work. In His name

and service,

**Rev. Nina St. Clair Carlsen
Mayer, Arizona**

Praise our Heavenly Family that they give you the strength to carry the world's burdens. We read with wonderment of your moving about so much, and where the Lord leads you with the message of "The Mystery of God" — now so clearly disclosed. Of the fire, we await the steps to follow as the Lord unfolds them. I hope these few lines will refresh you in

(Continued next page)

Are the 144,000 of Both Sexes?

BY VICTOR T. HOUTEFF

The command to mark this company so that they fall not under the slaughter weapons by the figure of the five men, reads as follows: "And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." (Ezekiel 9:4.) Because the Word says: "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men," therefore some have held the position that the entire company is made up of men only. The second reason given for this erroneous idea is that they are to be kings and priests and therefore they must be men. The idea carried by these passages cannot be sustained by other portions of Scripture. Thus we are compelled to study deeper into the subject.

While Ezekiel calls them "men," John says they are "virgins." (Rev. 14:4.) Now, if we should take the position that Ezekiel means men only, then we can as well say, John means women only. Can it be possible that one writer should contradict the other? No indeed. We conclude by the following Scriptures that the 144,000 are of both sexes: "The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe." (John 1:7.) "All men," must include both men and women, otherwise salvation would be for men only. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32.) If the word all men in this text does not include both sexes, then the women are lost. "And the time of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (The Acts 17:30.) Again, if "all men" include not both male and female, then women are not commanded to repent. It is evident that the noun, men, is a collective Biblical term of both men and women. The same is true by creation, for, God made the woman of the man. Therefore, she is a wo-man. Again in Gal. 3:28, we read: "There is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Since there is no difference between either sex in Christ, then we see that women as well as men can be kings and priests. The same thought can be carried out by the experience of the Jewish nation: "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time. . . . And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment." (Judges 4:4, 5.) This woman held a man's position, being a judge of God's people, which is equivalent to a king. Not only a king, but she was a prophetess as well. Again we read in Luke 2:36, 37, "And there was one Anna, a

prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." Also the wife of Shallum being a prophetess taught Israel and controlled the college. (See 2 Kings 22: 14-16.) Phillip the evangelist had four daughters who also did prophesy. (See The Acts 21:8, 9.)

From Paul's statement in 1 Timothy 2:12, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence," you will note the meaning here is, that the woman is to be in subjection to the man as God had ordained, and not that she is forbidden to hold the office of a teacher. Again we quote, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." (1 Cor. 14:34.) Read the chapter and you will see that Paul wishes to establish order in the churches, for there was great confusion by speaking in unknown tongues. Therefore, to silence the confusion, he says: "Let your women keep silence in the churches." He is not forbidding them to speak if they have a duty to perform. If this lesson was heeded in this age there would be a great change for the better in the house of God.

In the beginning God created both the man and the woman equal, as king and queen. "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28.) Note that the dominion was given to them both. However, after they sinned a change was made: "Unto the woman He said, . . . thy desire shall be to thy husband, and He shall rule over thee." (Gen. 3:16.) So, after the woman sinned she fell under the government of man. But that which Eve lost by deception, shall be restored by redemption. Thus again the equality of both shall be established as kings and queens. Therefore, "There is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus." Christ himself confirms the idea in the following expression: "For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven." (Mark 12:25.)

Thus the noun "men" used by Ezekiel, and the noun "virgins" by John is a collective Biblical term comprehending both.

LETTERS

the knowledge that we, who claim the knowledge and work of the Heavenly Family in making us "true images," support you in every way.

Walter S. Whineray
Strathmore, Australia

I attended a gospel concert here in Detroit in January, the concert was hosted by Martha Jean (the Queen)

Steinberg. At the time 'the Queen' presented you with an award. I was unaware of your great accomplishments and endeavors then. But upon leaving the concert I received two editions of SHEKINAH. I read them some time later and was very impressed and excited by the information. Please place me on your mailing list. Please keep the faith and continue your enlightening mission, and I

know our Father, Mother everything God is blessing you. Love,

Cordette Swain
Detroit, Michigan

We would like very much to be reinstated on your mailing list. Since we have a complete run of the quarterly, we surely do want to continue to receive it. We feel

(See Letters, page 30)

Feminine Images of God

BY LEONARD SWIDLER

c. Union with the Feminine Divinity

The goal of mysticism is the union of the human with the divine. Since in the Jewish mystical tradition the Divinity, insofar as it relates to creation, is known as the female Shekinah, it is with her that the Jewish mystic strives for union. This of course simply continues the ancient Hebrew tradition of Hokmah being God vis-à-vis creation, with whom union was avidly sought by human beings. In one instance in the Zohar this union of a human being (Moses—he was the only case) with the Shekinah was described as having taken place in terms of sexual intercourse (analogous to the “coming upon” Mary the mother of Jesus by the Holy Spirit in Lk 1:35 and Mt 1:20).

The Matronit* . . . became mated (*isdavga*) with Moses. Moses had intercourse (*shimesh*) while he was in the body of the moon.* (Zohar I.21b-22a)

*[The Matronit is here a synonym for Shekinah; the moon is a symbol of the Shekinah.]

d. The Shekinah and a Female Messiah

In the seventeenth century one offshoot of Jewish mysticism, Sabbatianism, developed a trinitarian notion of God, including the Shekinah, who had a corresponding female Messiah.

The object of religion, the goal of our prayers, can only be “the God of Israel” and its unity or union with his Shekhinah. From this original dualism some Sabbatians developed a Trinity of the unknown God, the God of Israel and the Shekhinah, and it did not take long for the idea to develop that the completion of Salvation is dependent upon the appearance of a Messiah for each of these three aspects of Trinity, with a female Messiah for the last! (Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, p. 320)

e. Kabbala Nevertheless Fundamentally Masculine

Despite the projection of a feminine dimension in the Divinity by Jewish mysticism, two counterpunal elements should be noted: one, the female represents not the tender but the stern; two, like most of the rest of Judaism, Kabbalism is by and for men.

It is of the essence of Kabbalistic symbolism that woman represents not, as one might be tempted to expect, the quality of tenderness but that of stern judgment. . . . Both historically and metaphysically it is a masculine doctrine, made for men and by men. The long history of Jewish mysticism shows no trace of feminine influence. There have been no women Kabbalists; Rabbia of early Islamic mysticism, Mechthild of Magdeburg, Juliana of Norwich, Theresa de Jesus, and the many other feminine representatives of Christian mysticism have no counterparts in the history of Kabbalism. (Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, p. 36)

B. FEMININE HOLY SPIRIT IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Because the Book of Wisdom was written originally in Greek (most likely by a Jew of Alexandria in the first century B.C.E.), the word used for Wisdom is *sophia*, which, like the Hebrew *hokmah*, is feminine in gender and imagery. As noted above, the Hebrew word for Spirit of God, *ruach*, is also feminine. However, the Greek word for Spirit, *pneuma*, is not feminine, but neuter. Nevertheless, in the Book of Wisdom the two, Wisdom and Spirit, are identified. Because the tradition of Wisdom as feminine was so strong, plus the fact that Spirit is also feminine in Hebrew, though neuter in Greek, the identification of the Spirit of God with Lady Wisdom has at times in the Christian tradition led to the imaging of the Holy Spirit as feminine. A few examples follow.

§48. Holy Spirit the Mother of Jesus — I

In the second-century Coptic-language apocryphal Epistle of James (see below, pp. 66f., for a brief discussion of apocryphal and Gnostic Christian writings), the Holy Spirit is cast in the image of the parent of Jesus; since elsewhere in the epistle God the Father is referred to as Jesus' father, presumably the Holy Spirit is meant to be Jesus' mother. The risen Christ says to James and the other disciples:

You are chosen, you are like the Son of the Holy Spirit. (*Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 8, 1954, p. 12)

§49. Holy Spirit the Mother of Jesus — II

Another motherly image of the Holy Spirit is found in the apocryphal Gospel to the Hebrews, written around A.D. 150.

And it came to pass when the Lord [Jesus at his baptism in the Jordan River] came up out of the water, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit descended upon him and rested on him and said to him: My son . . . thou art my first-begotten Son that reignest for ever. (Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*, Vol. 1, pp. 163-164; Westminster Press, 1963)

§50. Holy Spirit the Mother of Jesus — III

If there be any doubt that the Holy Spirit was depicted in the Gospel to the Hebrews as Jesus' mother, the following quotation will lay it to rest.

Even so did my mother, the Holy Spirit, take me by one of my hairs and carry me away onto the great mountain Thabor. (Ibid., p. 164)

§51. The Holy Spirit Is a Woman — I

In the third-century Gnostic Christian apocryphal Gospel of Philip the Holy Spirit of God is at one place assumed to be a woman, as is clear from the quotation below referring to the Matthean and Lukan claims of the virginal conception of Jesus.

Some said, "Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit." They are in error. They do not know what they are saying. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman? Mary is the virgin. . . . (Gospel of Philip, *The Nag Hammadi Library*, tr. by James M. Robinson et al., p. 134; Harper & Row, 1977)

§52. The Holy Spirit Is a Woman — II

The Acts of Thomas, an early third-century Gnostic Christian apocryphal writing, contains several lengthy prayers and one brief one, which address or refer to the Holy Spirit in feminine imagery. The three lengthy prayers are all epicleses, that is, prayers calling on the Holy Spirit to descend upon the liturgical matter, usually the bread and wine used in the celebration of the Eucharist. The first orthodox text of one is from Hippolytus in the early third century, contemporaneous with the Acts of Thomas. In the latter, two of the epicleses are invocations of the Holy Spirit at a Eucharist, but one is connected with Confirmation, which is also customary in orthodox Catholic Christianity. The connections between the feminine Wisdom, the Mother (Mater Magna, the Goddess), love, the Eucharist, the dove (symbol of the Goddess, and of the Holy Spirit, discussed in §55), and the Holy Spirit are all obvious.

"O Jesus Christ, . . . we glorify and praise thee and thine invisible Father and thy Holy Spirit and the Mother of all creation." (Acts of Thomas, Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*, Vol. 2, p. 465; Westminster Press, 1966)

And the apostle took the oil and pouring it on their heads anointed and chrismed them, and began to say:

Come, holy name of Christ *that is above every name*;
Come, power of the Most High and perfect compassion;
Come, thou highest gift;
Come, compassionate mother;
Come, fellowship of the male;
Come, thou (fem.) that dost reveal the hidden mysteries;
Come, mother of the seven houses, that thy rest may be in the eighth house;
Come, elder of the five members, understanding, thought, prudence, consideration, reasoning,
Communicate with these young men!
Come, Holy Spirit, and purify their reins and their heart
And give them the added seal in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. (Ibid., pp. 456-457)

And spreading a linen cloth, he set upon it the bread of blessing. And the apostle stood beside it and said: "Jesus, who hast made us worthy to partake of the Eucharist of thy holy body and blood, behold we make bold to approach thy Eucharist, and to call upon thy holy name; come thou and have fellowship with us!" And he began to say:

Come, gift of the Most High;
Come, perfect compassion;
Come, fellowship of the male;
Come, Holy Spirit;
Come, thou that dost know the mysteries of the Chosen;
Come, thou that hast part in all the combats of the noble Athlete;
Come, treasure of glory;
Come, darling of the compassion of the Most High;
Come, silence
That dost reveal the great deeds of the whole greatness;
And make the ineffable manifest;
Holy Dove
That bearest the twin young;
Come, hidden Mother;
Come, thou that art manifest in thy deeds and dost furnish joy
And rest for all that are joined with thee;
Come and partake with us in this Eucharist
Which we celebrate in thy name,
And in the love-feast

In which we are gathered together at thy call.

And when he had said this, he marked the Cross upon the bread and broke it, and began to distribute it. And first he gave to the woman, saying: "Let this be to thee for forgiveness of sins and eternal transgressions!" And after her he gave also to all the others who had received the seal. (Ibid., pp. 470-471)

And when they were baptized and clothed, he set bread upon the table and blessed it and said: "Bread of life, those who eat of which remain incorruptible; bread which fills hungry souls with its blessing . . . we name over thee the name of the mother of the ineffable mystery of the hidden dominions and powers, we name over thee the name of Jesus." (Ibid., p. 512)

§53. The Deaconess a Type of the Holy Spirit

In the third-century A.D. orthodox Christian document written in Syriac (a Semitic language, derived from the earlier Aramaic), the Didascalia, the imagery moves in the other direction. There a woman, a deaconess, is likened to the Holy Spirit.

And the deaconess shall be honored by you as a type of the Holy Spirit. (Didascalia II.26.4)

§54. The Holy Spirit, Mother of Humanity

The tradition continued in the Syriac-speaking area ("spirit" also has the feminine gender in Syriac, as in Hebrew), as in the writings of the fourth-century orthodox Christian father Aphraates.

A man who is yet unmarried loves and honors God his father and the Holy Spirit his mother. (Aphraates, Homily XVIII.10—on Genesis 2:24)

§55. The Dove, Symbol of the Holy Spirit and the "Great Mother"

The dove appears many times in the Hebrew Bible, but its most pervasive symbolic meaning is "love," as is amply exemplified, especially in the Song of Songs. In Christian tradition it is also immediately connected with the Holy Spirit, for all four Gospels, in speaking of the baptism of Jesus, say that "the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove" (Lk 3:22; cf. Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Jn 1:33). Of course, in Christian tradition the Holy Spirit is also said to be the spirit of love, so that the two currents of meaning flow together. But it is also particularly interesting to note that the dove is also a very ancient symbol for the Goddess of Love, which of course fits perfectly well with the Hebrew Bible symbol of love and the Christian carry-over of the feminine Wisdom traditions to the Holy Spirit, who is also the Spirit of Love, and thus also the Christian continuance of the Goddess of Love, the Mater Magna, the "Great Mother."

However, since the most ancient times the dove is the holy animal not only of the Cyprian Aphrodite, but also of almost all the Goddesses of Fertility and Love of the Near East. Already in neolithic times the "Great Mother" who was venerated in Crete was represented with dove and lily. The Greek word for dove, *peristera*, means "bird of Istar," the Assyrian-Babylonian Goddess of Love, but also of the Underworld and Death. Istar had many names: Astarte (Ashtoreth) and Hathor, Inanna and Nut, Cybele and Isis, and many others. However, as also with the Greek Aphrodite and the Roman Venus, the dove was always holy to them. Often they themselves appeared winged, like a great dove brooding over the world, as in Knossos and Mycenae, in Sicily and Carthage, on the Euphrates and on Cyprus, and even in India. Doves were culticly protected; great towers were built for them in which they could nest; they were called *columbaria* (*columba* is the Latin word for dove). *Columbaria*, dove houses, were also known in ancient Rome, however, as grave chambers with niches for urns.

The dove is the only symbol for the Holy Spirit that is permitted by the Church. Thus the figure of the dove in the cupolas or over the high altars of Diessen, Dietramszell, Ettal, Ottobeuren, Vierzehnheiligen, Weingarten, and the Wieskirche also point to the "Great Mother" just as much as do the fact that the cathedrals of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, Kiev, and many other Orthodox cities are consecrated to heavenly Wisdom, which is presented in feminine form. (Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner, "Ist der Heilige Geist weiblich?" *Una Sancta*, 1977, pp. 275ff.)

LETTERS

that it will have much use in years to come as researchers seek knowledge of the religious thought of the 1980's.

Virginia Ming
The Texas Collection
Baylor University
Waco, Texas

We regret that your building caught fire and wish you a speedy recovery. We would like to continue receiving SHEKINAH once you get in a position to publish again.

Christine Wenderoth
John Bulow Campbell Library
Columbia Theological Seminary
Decatur, Georgia

I was very sorry to hear about the fire and pray that SHEKINAH will rise again. I know she will. Please continue to send your valuable resource which we pass on and share with others.

Mary E. Hunt
Women's Alliance for Theology,
Ethics and Ritual
Silver Spring, Maryland

In response to your letter of April 8th, we are most anxious to remain on your mailing list for the quarterly issues of SHEKINAH magazine. We rejoice that you are of good courage and that restoration plans are underway. Praise the Lord!

Cheryl L. Drumheller
Fellowship of Charismatic Christians
In The United Church of Christ
Sassamansville, Pennsylvania

We were distressed to hear of the terrible fire that has temporarily set back the publication of SHEKINAH magazine. We would definitely like to go on receiving your fine publication and will try to see what kind of support we can find in the area for you.

James Walter
Kirtley Library
Columbia College
Columbia, Missouri

Please continue Pitts Theology Library on your mailing list for SHEKINAH. So sorry to hear of the fire. Best wishes for the rebuilding.

Cynthia Runyon
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia

We regret to learn of the fire which de-

stroyed the building which housed your publishing department for SHEKINAH magazine. We are pleased that you plan to rebuild and continue publishing SHEKINAH. As we desire to continue receiving this quarterly, please put us on your new mailing list.

Myrta Garrett
Serials Dept., Roberts Library
Southwestern Baptist
Theological Seminary
Ft. Worth, Texas

The following two letters appeared in *The Christian Century* (March 23-30, 1983), in response to their printing of the John Dart article (Feb. 16-23), which is reprinted herein beginning on page 5.

Holy Spirit's Gender

JOHN DART correctly identifies a number of valid sources supporting the concept of a feminine Holy Spirit in "Balancing Out the Trinity: The Genders of the Godhead" (Feb. 16-23). But the implications to modern faith of this conviction among many early Christians remain largely unexplored. At the very least, the challenge should no longer be ignored.

The long-suppressed Gnostic literature, now available in the *Nag Hammadi Library* (Harper & Row, 1977), is far more explicit than Mr. Dart appears to suggest. For example, the Gospel of Philip questions one widely held belief: "Some said, 'Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit.' They are in error. They do not know what they are saying. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman?" There are many more.

Critical examination of the Gnostic tradition, including a feminine Holy Spirit, might well serve to enrich our faith. In any event, Christianity has always faced great challenges. It can't afford to retreat now.

Robert J. Juergen.
Ethics Consultants Associates
Fripp Island, South Carolina

The "genders" of the Godhead? A grammar lesson in the Century? I always thought that the "genders" pretty much depended on the conventions of the languages involved; e.g., feminine as in Latin and Greek (*trinitas, ē agia trias*) or German (*Gottheit*), or common as in the Nordic languages (*gudom*). I assume that

"godhead" is neuter in English?

Are we to assume that a masculinity of God which has always been understood metaphorically and analogously will be "improved" by adding a literal femininity? A *real* sexuality in God?

The level of the enterprise can be illustrated by references to speculations about androgyny in Pauline thinking, followed by the statement "Paul does not bring up questions of androgyny. Nonetheless. . ."

It is indeed unfortunate that God chose the wrong sex (that's what it's really all about, isn't it?); perhaps we can reach that point of maturity at which we can graciously forgive him?

Next to the love-of-money phrase, Galatians 3:28 must be the most misquoted Pauline phrase. It does not read "male or female." The status is eschatological; the key lies in verse 26: "For through faith you are all *sons of God* in union with Christ Jesus." Check your concordance, for there is a distinction of meaning between "sons of God" and "children of God." As John aptly puts it, "Now we are children of God, but what we shall be" is "sons of God." "Children of God" is descriptive of our present status; what the eschaton will reveal is the "sons of God" (equality with Christ; deification; partakers of the divine nature?). As the equivalent item in Luke comments: "They are like angels; they are sons of God, because they share in the resurrection."

Winston F. Jensen
Church of St. Alban the Martyr
Superior, Wisconsin

BOYS ONLY — from page 2

lation when the girls were appointed.

Latin Mass Society spokesman, Mrs. M. F. Wilkins, said her members had complained twice to Archbishop Gleason about altar girls but had received no reply. She said the matter had been reported because the priests using altar girls were "disobeying the Holy Father."

Dean Chamberlin, of Melbourne's St. Patrick's Cathedral, said the use of altar girls was not a problem. "In this atomic age with unemployment and 57 other major problems, the question of altar girls is not of major importance," he said. It was the "general thing" that girls were not eligible to act as altar servers at Mass, he said. **THE HERALD (AUSTRALIA)**
Thursday, June 2, 1983

ANGEL - GRAM

March, 1983


Bishop Lois I. Roden
Living Waters Foundation
P. O. Box 4098
Waco, Texas 76705

Dear Bishop Roden:

Out of the many dozens of entries in competition for the Angel Awards, yours stood out as a powerful influence for good. We congratulate you on your outstanding achievement as we forward this certificate which you so richly deserve.

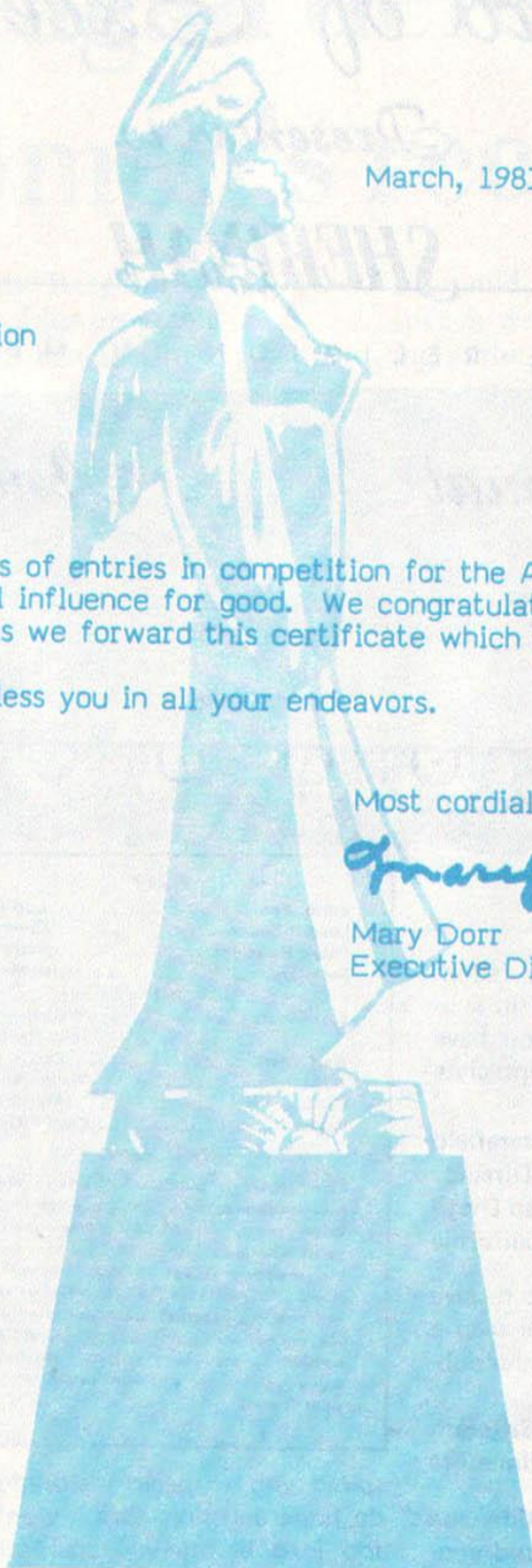
May God continue to bless you in all your endeavors.

Most cordially,



Mary Dorr
Executive Director

MD:cr
Enclosure



Mary Dorr, Executive Director

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