

## THEOLOGICAL TRENDS

### Catholic Social Thought Encounters Feminism

THE YEAR 1991 MARKS THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum novarum*, the birth of official papal teaching on Catholic social thought. The ensuing century has witnessed a remarkable growth in the tradition as the body of official Catholic social teaching evolved to respond to the changing complexities of modern life. Eleven major papal documents from *Rerum novarum* ('The condition of labour'), 1891, to *Sollicitudo rei socialis* ('On social concern'), 1988, enhanced by *Gaudium et spes* from the Second Vatican Council and the documents of Synods of Bishops chart the Church's response to the social developments of the century.<sup>1</sup> These documents are a rich heritage of teaching on the meaning of the human person in society.

A study of these documents reveals a dramatic evolution in attitude and methodology of Catholic social thought.<sup>2</sup> This evolution follows the emerging human consciousness of personal dignity, freedom and equality that has characterized the twentieth century, as well as the recognition that a narrow application of the so-called objective principles of natural law is insufficient to respond to the historical and subjective complexities of human persons interacting in the social order.

Vatican Council II stands as a watershed moment in this evolution. During this historic Council, the Church shifted from a defensive stance of isolation from the trends of the contemporary world to a recognition that it must be an actor in shaping that world. In this process, the Church not only recognized its role in human history but also the effect of human history on its own life. Reading the 'signs of the times' has become the process of the Church's encounter with human history.

When the Council closed in 1965, one of the most significant 'signs of the times' of the last half of the twentieth century was just beginning to make its voice heard. In 1963, with the publication of Betty Freidan's *The feminine mystique*, the second wave of the women's movement began in the western world. It is creating one of the most far-reaching social revolutions of our time. The very process of women redefining their self-understanding and seeking mutual and equal relationships with men in all dimensions of life is creating new realities and different social needs in our lives. It is shaping and reshaping our expectations and experiences in personal relationships and in all our social and ecclesial institutions. It is challenging all traditional, patriarchal knowledge, institutions and systems.

It is also opening new horizons for social ethics as the profound but subtle shifting of social institutions has become evident. We are discovering

that the women's movement is not only about justice for women, it is also about the future shape of our Church and our world. On these horizons of the future, feminism encounters Catholic social thought.

Catholic social thought claims that its themes and principles apply universally. Feminist analysis evaluates that claim first of all by asking two questions: How does Catholic social thought deal with women? Does it accurately reflect women's experience?

#### *Women in Catholic social thought*

Before the encyclicals of Pope John XXIII, women are seldom mentioned in social documents except implicitly under generic statements regarding the dignity of 'man' (that is the human person), and under the category of family.

In the first social encyclical, Leo XIII's *Rerum novarum* ('On the condition of labour'), 1891, women are implicitly included under the concern for the family. Leo XIII's world view was authoritarian and paternalistic, with clearly defined roles for everyone.<sup>3</sup> For Leo XIII, women's place and role were clear, divinely ordained and therefore in no need of elaboration. It was the worker and the family that occupied his concern. Workers were understood as men. Justice for workers meant that the rights of their families would be protected and that they, as heads of families, would receive just wages. Women as wives and mothers would be economically dependent on the just wage of the working father. The controlling image in this document is the traditional, patriarchal family structure. This particular point of view continues to shape Catholic social teaching up to the present.

In *Quadragesimo anno* ('The reconstruction of the social order'), by Pius XI, 1931, women do specifically appear as workers. They are mentioned in the section 'Support of the worker and his [*sic*] family'. Women and children are mentioned in the same sentence: 'But to abuse the years of childhood and the limited strength of women is grossly wrong'.<sup>4</sup> Both are considered dependent and in need of special protection. Women are not seen as autonomous adults. This habit of identifying women with children and other dependent persons has been the accepted norm in most Catholic writing, particularly in canon law.<sup>5</sup>

The first time women enter Catholic social thought in their own right is in John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in terris* ('Peace on earth'), 1963. He identifies three 'distinctive characteristics' of our age—signs of our times: the rise of the working class, the participation of women in public life and the emergence of new nations.<sup>6</sup> John writes:

Secondly, it is obvious to everyone that women are now taking a part in public life. This is happening more rapidly perhaps in nations with a Christian tradition, and more slowly, but broadly,

among peoples who have inherited other traditions or cultures. Since women are becoming ever more conscious of their human dignity, they will not tolerate being treated as inanimate objects or mere instruments, but claim, both in domestic and in public life, the rights and duties that befit a human person.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover, in this encyclical John declares that every person is endowed with intelligence and free will and has universal and inviolable rights and duties. He identifies these rights as political, economic, social, cultural and moral. By including women specifically in this document, he is explicitly declaring that women have the same rights and duties as men.

Within the writings of John XXIII and the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962, the world view of Catholic social thought had altered significantly. The static, hierarchical, authoritarian and paternalistic world of Leo XIII had shifted to a view shaped by historical consciousness, a recognition of the radical freedom of the human person, and the autonomy of the world from religion's control.

*Gaudium et spes* ('The pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world'), 1965, was the centrepiece of social teaching that emerged from Vatican Council II. The document rings with affirmation of the fundamental dignity of the human person. Because the document uses the Latin word *homo*—the human person, rather than *vir*—the male person, its references to the human person, humanity and the entire human family clearly intend to include women in this fundamental human dignity. Moreover, it states that 'with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language, or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent'.<sup>8</sup> However, at times the language of the document slips and seems to reveal that the Fathers of the Council are really talking about men. Such words as 'brotherly dialogue' and 'brotherhood' exclude women.<sup>9</sup>

It is interesting to note that women appear in their own right for the first time in relation to a perceived problem. The first such reference comes in a section on 'Imbalances in the modern world': 'As for the family, discord results from demographic, economic, and social pressures, or from difficulties which arise between succeeding generations, or from new social relationships between men and women'.<sup>10</sup> Setting the 'new social relationships' under the heading 'Imbalances in the modern world' reflects a patriarchal interpretation of the changes related to women's rising consciousness.

In the section on the 'Dignity of the human person', the document reads 'But God did not create man as a solitary. For from the beginning "male and female he created them" (Gen 1,27)'. The subsequent discussion of marriage and family succeeds in talking about women and men, spouses and parents even-handedly.

However, in the section on culture, the traditional ambiguity concerning women's rights appears. Recognizing that humans are the authors of culture the document states, 'In every group or nation, there is an ever-increasing number of men and women who are conscious that they themselves are the artisans and the authors of the culture of their community'. Several sections beyond this statement of mutual responsibility and participation, the document qualifies itself: 'Women are now employed in almost every area of life. It is appropriate that they should be able to assume their full *proper role in accordance with their own nature*. Everyone should acknowledge and favour the *proper* and necessary participation of women in cultural life' (emphasis added).<sup>11</sup> We are confronted here with a statement that women's nature, and therefore presumably their rights contingent upon that nature, are different from men's nature and rights. We are confronted with a concept of a dual human nature—there is human nature, which is equated with men's nature and then there is women's nature.

Women as women next appear in Paul VI's *Octogesima adveniens* ('A call to action'), 1971. He continues the concept of a dual human nature:

Similarly, in many countries a charter for women which would put an end to an actual discrimination and would establish relationships of equality in rights and of respect for their dignity is the object of study and at times of lively demands. We do not have in mind that false equality which would deny the distinctions laid down by the Creator himself and which would be in contradiction with woman's *proper role*, which is of such capital importance, at the heart of the family as well as within society. Development in legislation should on the contrary be directed to protecting her *proper vocation* and at the same time recognizing her independence as a person, and her equal rights to participate in cultural, economic, social and political life (emphasis added).<sup>12</sup>

Can a person having a proper role and vocation, pre-determined by her nature and needing special protection, still be independent and have equal rights with a person who has no such qualifying and limiting definitions pre-determined by his nature?

'Justice in the world', the statement of the 1971 Synod of Bishops, introduces the question of justice in the Church regarding women. The document declares that anyone who ventures to preach justice must first be perceived as being just. It then lists specific rights that must be preserved within the Church, namely, all ordinary rights, a decent wage, security, promotion, freedom of thought and expression, proper judicial procedures and participation in decision-making. In particular the document states that women have equal rights and responsibilities without

any qualification: 'We also urge that women should have their own share of responsibility and participation in the community life of society and likewise of the Church'.<sup>13</sup>

'Justice in the world' also speaks of the social movements among peoples as 'a new awareness which shakes them out of any fatalistic resignation and which spurs them on to liberate themselves and to be responsible for their own destiny'.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, it introduces the need to change social structures if justice is to become a reality in people's lives: 'This desire [for human rights], however, will not satisfy the expectations of our time if it ignores the objective obstacles which social structures place in the way of conversion of hearts, or even of the realization of ideal charity'.<sup>15</sup>

This document brings together several powerful themes that support women's struggle for justice in the Church and in the world. In calling for justice in the Church, especially for women, and in affirming social movements whereby people assume responsibility for their own lives to change oppressive structures, 'Justice in the world' affirms women's struggle for liberation.

In *Laborem exercens* ('On human labour'), 1981, John Paul II makes explicit his views on the proper role and vocation of women. The encyclical, while recognizing that women do work outside the home, continues the tradition that the primary role of women is to be responsible for the family and the primary role of men is to be responsible for economic support of the family. John Paul continues the position that the man, as head of the family, is entitled to a family wage. In reality, he is re-asserting the patriarchal model of the family. He calls for a 'social re-evaluation of the mother's role', calling for a society to support a woman in this role, not inhibiting her freedom or in any other way penalizing her as compared with other women. He speaks of women 'having to abandon' their tasks as mothers as being wrong from the point of view of society and the family. Finally, he insists that 'true advancement of women requires that labor should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them and at the expense of the family, in which women as mothers have an irreplaceable role'.<sup>16</sup>

John Paul does not call for a concomitant social re-evaluation of fatherhood.

The purpose of raising these issues is not to deny or denigrate the social role and value of women who choose childrearing and homemaking as their primary work. Rather it is to bring into perspective the multiple roles and potential of women. Furthermore, to so emphasize that women are primarily responsible for the quality of family life diminishes the social role and value of fatherhood. It disenfranchises men from the full potential of their fatherhood while it disenfranchises women from the full

potential of their personhood. Until the Church is able to recognize the mutuality of women and men in all dimensions of life, its reflection and teaching will remain inadequate to contemporary realities.

*Sollicitudo rei socialis* ('The social concern of the Church'), 1988, John Paul II's encyclical on international development, was written to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Paul VI's *Populorum progressio* ('On the progress of peoples'). Both these documents lack a gender perspective; women are included under the generic terms of man, humanity, human family. In several instances John Paul II does name women as women, specifically when he is outlining the failure of the development process. For example,

Looking at all the various sectors—the production and distribution of foodstuffs, hygiene, health and housing, availability of drinking water, working conditions (especially for women), life expectancy and other economic and social indicators . . .<sup>17</sup>

It is worth noting that in the section on demography, John Paul II develops his argument about population and the birth-rate without adverting to women's unique place in this issue. The encyclical does not add any new insights concerning women to Catholic social thought. Nor does it contain any of the insights of current feminist critiques of the development processes.

Clearly this overview of women's position in Catholic social teaching reveals a patriarchal bias. First of all it has been written by men, primarily about men; secondly, its framework is androcentric, that is, it assumes that man, in this case, white Western man, is normative for the human; and third, when women are included, they are defined from a patriarchal point of view.

#### *Women's experience and Catholic social thought*

Before critiquing some of the central themes in Catholic social thought from a feminist perspective, the issue of methodology needs to be raised. How is Catholic social thought developed and who participates in its development? All Catholic teaching is shaped by reflections on the 'Word of God in the scriptures, on tradition, on the teaching of the church, on the signs of the times, and on the eschatological pull of the future'.<sup>18</sup> Having recognized this reality, it is also necessary to recognize that all these resources are in the process of a feminist revisioning because they all are shaped by a patriarchal bias. However, in this article, I will speak only to the issue of 'reading the signs of the times'. The decision to focus on this method is two-fold: 1) identifying the 'signs of the times' is particularly germane in Catholic social thought and in the Church's social mission; and 2) revealing the patriarchal bias in one method points to its presence in other methods.

In *Pacem in terris*, John XXIII introduced the reading of the 'signs of the times' into the methodology of developing Catholic social thought. He was drawing upon the 'basic Christian belief that God continues to speak in and through human history':

The Church looks to the world and discovers there God's presence. Signs both reveal God's presence in the world and manifest God's designs for the world. Implicit in this truth is that theology must go beyond the purely deductive and speculative. History ceases to be the mere context for the application of binding principles, which are derived uniquely from speculative and philosophical reasoning. It becomes the place of on-going revelation.<sup>19</sup>

Women's rising consciousness of their own dignity is a 'sign of our times'. As such it demands the attention of the Church. The Church cannot simply reach back into its tradition to address this reality because it 'lacks a strong tradition regarding the equality and basic dignity and worth of women'.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the current reflection and articulation of women's experience is raising new issues both in society and in the Church.

Feminists rightly raise the question, 'Who reads the "signs of the times"?' Or even more pointedly, 'Whose reading is listened to?' The further question then becomes 'Who decides on the response to these "signs" in framing the social mission of the church?' Catholic social teaching has been the province of the patriarchal Church: men are the sole authors, only men sit in a decision-making capacity in the deliberative bodies of the Church—ecumenical councils, synods, conferences of bishops. When women are present they, at most, have a consultative role to play.

If women's rising consciousness is a manifestation of God's design for the world, as John XXIII in *Pacem in terris* declared, can Catholic teaching continue to be authentic if the voices of women are kept silent and/or circumscribed by men's interpretation? I am reminded of Gamaliel's intervention to the Sanhedrin in the early days of the founding of the Church: 'If this enterprise, this movement of theirs, is of human origin it will break up of its own accord; but if it does in fact come from God you will not only be unable to destroy them, but you might find yourselves fighting against God' (Acts 5,38-40).

For Catholic feminists this sense of the 'rightness' of their struggle for liberation is shaped by an understanding of their quest as a 'sign of our time'. This quest is not a struggle for self-aggrandizement as its critics accuse, but a quest for the integrity of the gospel and the authenticity of the Church in the contemporary world. It is also a struggle for the liberation of our concept of God from the limiting images and perspective that male-only images of the divine bring.

Finally, if the dialogue between feminism and the Church—the people of God and its institutional organization—could open up to mutuality and co-responsibility in the shaping of its teaching and the framing of its mission, a more authentic reading of God's design for the world would begin to reveal itself: a design less hampered or distorted by arrogance and egoism among either the men or the women of the Church.

The key for a feminist revision of Catholic social thought is to re-define the dual-nature concept that shapes its thinking about the dignity of the human person. In seeking to recognize that women and men are different, it has created the dilemma of human nature—read man's nature—and women's 'proper' nature. Feminism rejects this duality, pointing out that it is the very concept of woman's 'proper' nature that has been used to keep women in a subordinate position in all social structures. In framing a theological anthropology on the meaning of the human, feminism would insist on the foundational category of personhood, not on proper roles. Sex is a secondary category.

When this dual-nature concept is revised, several other themes of Catholic social thought are immediately opened for a revised analysis. Among them I would list political and economic rights, political participation, economic justice, option for the poor and the common good.

*Political and economic rights.* While, theoretically, Catholic social thought would agree that there is only one human nature, practically, in shaping its application of human rights and duties, it uses a dual nature and role approach. For example, within the tradition, economic rights of workers are primarily presented as men's economic rights. The right to a family wage as articulated from Leo XIII in *Rerum novarum* to John Paul II in *Laborem exercens* is understood as a wage paid to the father as head of the family to insure that there is sufficient income for the mother to stay at home to perform her 'primary' responsibilities.

Catholic social thought remains ambiguous on the question of women's economic rights. It would probably be more accurate to say that given its patriarchal bias, it has never thought through the implications of economic rights in relation to women. However, unless women have economic rights in their own right, they will remain economically dependent either upon their husbands, fathers or other male members of the family, or they will become dependent upon the welfare state.

Economic independence is one of the keys to women's liberation. When women and men both enjoy equal economic rights and opportunities, their relationships in all other dimensions of life, such as homemaking and childrearing, can indeed move toward mutuality.

Furthermore, this concept of the father as the primary breadwinner in the family continues to justify treating women and men differently in the work place. A woman's participation in the work force is considered secondary for two reasons; 1) her primary work is defined as homemaking



and childrearing; and 2) her income from her job outside the home is considered secondary or even superfluous for the economic well-being of the family. Therefore, women can justifiably be paid less and have fewer opportunities for advancement. Not only is this reasoning untrue to a growing number of women and families, it also puts women at a disadvantage in both the home and the work place. The clearest example we have of this disadvantage is the current phenomenon in the U.S. called the 'feminization of poverty'.<sup>21</sup> The phenomenon should be more accurately described as the 'pauperization of women and children'. As long as we do not positively think in terms of women's economic rights, as a society we will continue to have structures that enforce economic dependency on most women. In speaking of an option for the poor, the majority of whom are women and children, Catholic social thought needs to be more explicit in applying the principle of economic rights to women.

The same kind of disadvantage emerges when the question of political rights and political participation is discussed. Theoretically, Catholic social thought would argue for women's inalienable right as a human person to political participation at all levels. However, practically, by insisting that women's 'proper role' is motherhood and defining that role as including the primary responsibility for childrearing, the Church limits women's participation in political processes. A full recognition of women's inalienable right to participation in social structures demands a change in the Church's perspective on women's 'proper nature and role'. Such a change would also force the Church to recognize and correct its own denial of women's right to participate in orders and decision-making within its own institutional structures.

Both feminism and Catholic social thought recognize the centrality of the question of women as childbearers in their analyses. But their responses differ radically. Catholic social teaching takes a protective and limiting approach to women as a result of this reality. Women's potential and nature are circumscribed by one reality, the fact that mostly they bear children. The nature of woman is defined by one function that some or most women experience. The nature of man is never defined according to the singular function of fatherhood.

Feminism asserts, on the other hand, that women should not be defined or circumscribed by this single reality. Furthermore, feminism would insist that because women alone carry the responsibility for childbearing and in most cases for childrearing, only women should have control over this question.

In speaking of reproductive freedom, the distinction needs to be made between a woman controlling her fertility through birth-control methods and a woman choosing to have an abortion. Among feminists there is universal agreement that women have the right to birth-control information to control their fertility. Disagreement emerges over the 'right'

to abortion. Some feminists would argue that the 'right' argument does not cover all the problems that abortion raises and sets up a problem of conflicting rights: the right of the unborn; the right of the father; the right of the society. Others would argue the 'right' only exists when women have become pregnant through an abusive situation such as rape or incest. They would also argue that women have a right to abortion if their health or well-being are in danger. While some feminists believe that this right to abortion is absolute, others would want some parameters for that right. Some feminists would hold that reproductive freedom does not include the right to abortion. These differences among feminists do not necessarily follow the ideological stands of contemporary feminism. They more often arise from differing moral sensibilities. However, feminism would assert as a foundational principle that women must have control over their reproductive capacity.

The universality of this principle reflects the feminist analysis that women are subordinated and discriminated against in all social structures because of their biology and its potential interference with the functioning of social structures, in particular the political and economic structures of our world. From this analysis, feminism argues that women must be able to control their fertility in order to function freely within these structures.

Reproductive freedom is feminism's answer to the subordination and discrimination they experience in patriarchal structures. But a fundamental question needs to be considered. Is this desire for absolute control over fertility in some ways an implicit acceptance that the male's experience of sexuality without the reality of pregnancy is normative for the human? Feminism would deny that its goal is for women to be like men. In fact feminism has gone to great lengths to develop a variety of feminist alternatives to organizations, style of work, culture, ritual. But, because of the demands of the social structures framed by male experience, on the question of childbearing feminism has sought ways to accommodate to those structures rather than to transform them. Is this a fundamental dilemma implicit in contemporary feminism?

Catholic social teaching, while failing to develop an adequate theological anthropology for the human person, female and male, has intuitively been pointing, I suggest, to a profound reality. This intuition is best captured by Paul VI in *Octogesima adveniens*, where he writes,

Similarly, in many countries, a charter for women which could put an end to an actual discrimination and would establish relationships of equality in rights and of respect for their dignity is the object of study and at times of lively demands. We do not have in mind false equality which would deny the distinctions laid down by the Creator . . .<sup>22</sup>

Unfortunately Paul VI concludes by speaking of women's 'proper role', so the first half of this insight is lost in the dualism of the full statement. However, by insisting on the equal but distinct quality, he is opening the way to explore what that could mean as well as how it could become structured in social systems.

Can this insight open the way through Catholic social thought's dilemma of the dual-nature and feminism's dilemma of women's need to accommodate their childbearing capacity to patriarchal social structures? Would a dialogue between Catholic social thought and feminism reveal that the issue is not woman's reproductive capacity; the issue is that the structures are shaped by men's experience and have little or no space for this unique experience of women? It is not women who need to accommodate to these structures; these structures need to be transformed to accommodate to women.

*Common good.* A fundamental principle of Catholic social thought is the recognition of the human person not only as an individual but also as social. The dignity of the individual is best realized within the common good of the society. The common good is defined as 'the sum total of all those conditions of social living—economic, political, cultural—which make it possible for women and men readily and fully to achieve the perfection of their humanity'.<sup>23</sup> This relationship between the individual and the common good in Catholic social teaching is its unique contribution to our understanding of the social order.

Feminism can point to this principle as a challenge to the Church to widen its understanding of the common good in relation to women as well as women in their relation to the common good. In her article 'New patterns of relationships', Margaret Farley points out: 'From the standpoint of the Roman Catholic ethical tradition, it is a mistake to pit individual good against the good of the community, or the social good, when what is at stake is the fundamental dignity of the individual'.<sup>24</sup> This part of the tradition contradicts the very notion of circumscribing women within a particular function or set of duties.

Farley further argues from the point of view of subsidiarity, another principle of Catholic social thought, that the hierarchical model in any social structure must give way to an egalitarian model of social organization if the common good is to be realized. Applying this principle to relationships between women and men, she concludes: 'It is necessary to argue that in fact the good of the family, church, etc. is better served by a model of leadership which includes collaboration between equals'.<sup>25</sup> The twin principles of the common good and subsidiarity demand equality and mutuality not only in personal relations but also in social structures.

A feminist reading of Catholic social thought clearly reveals that it does not accurately reflect the experience of the majority of women in the contemporary world. Bringing the lived experience of women into the

shaping of future Catholic social ethics would expand the horizons of understanding of the interaction of human persons—women and men—in social and ecclesial structures. It would also give Catholic feminists—women and men—a perspective from which to engage in dialogue with the ideologies of contemporary feminism in the shaping of the future of the social and ecclesial order. Both feminism and Catholic social thought will be enriched by that dialogue.

*Maria Riley, O.P.*

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> A listing of the Vatican documents would include *Rerum novarum* ('The condition of labour'), 1891; *Quadragesimo anno* ('The reconstruction of the social order'), 1931; *Mater et magistra* ('Christianity and social progress'), 1961; *Pacem in terris* ('Peace on earth'), 1963; *Gaudium et spes* ('The Church in the modern world'), 1965; *Populorum progressio* ('The progress of peoples'), 1967; *Octogesima adveniens* ('A call to action'), 1971; 'Justice in the world', 1971; *Laborem exercens* ('On human labour'), 1981; and *Sollicitudo rei socialis* ('The social concerns of the Church'), 1988.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed account of this shift see Charles Curran, 'The changing anthropological bases of Catholic social ethics', in *Moral theology: a continuing journey* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1982), pp 173-208; and Gremillion, 'Evolution of Catholic social teaching since Pope John: the influence of secular currents and world events', in *The gospel of justice and peace*, pp 3-124; Christine E. Gudorf, 'Major differences: liberation theology and current Church teaching', in *Readings in moral theology*, No 5: *Official Catholic social teaching*, ed by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), pp 442-457, and Henriot, DeBerri and Schultheis: *Catholic social teaching: our best kept secret*, pp 7-19.

<sup>3</sup> Curran, *Moral theology: a continuing journey*, p 176.

<sup>4</sup> *Quadragesimo anno*, # 71.

<sup>5</sup> See 'The juridical status of women in contemporary ecclesial law', by Francis Morrissey O.M.I. in *Sexism and Church law*, ed by James Coriden (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), p 2. Morrissey writes, 'The Code legislation, as it stood in 1917, certainly ascribed a subordinate status for women, who were considered almost as dependent, passive or inferior members in the Church'. The new code of canon law has attempted to correct some of this bias.

<sup>6</sup> *Pacem in terris*, # 39-43.

<sup>7</sup> *Pacem in terris*, # 41.

<sup>8</sup> *Gaudium et spes*, # 29.

<sup>9</sup> *Gaudium et spes*, # 23.

<sup>10</sup> *Gaudium et spes*, # 8.

<sup>11</sup> *Gaudium et spes*, # 55 and 60.

<sup>12</sup> *Octogesima adveniens*, # 13.

<sup>13</sup> 'Justice in the world', # 41-46.

<sup>14</sup> 'Justice in the world', # 4.

<sup>15</sup> 'Justice in the world', # 16.

<sup>16</sup> *Laborem exercens*, # 19, *Origins* 11:15 (September 24, 1981).

<sup>17</sup> *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, # 14 in *Origins* 17:38 (March 3, 1988), p 646.

<sup>18</sup> Curran, *Moral theology: a continuing journey*, p 35.

<sup>19</sup> Henriot, DeBerri and Schultheis, p 18.

<sup>20</sup> 'LCWR board urges change of course', *Origins*, 14:40 (March 21, 1985), p 655.

<sup>21</sup> The term 'feminization of poverty' identifies the trend of growing poverty among women of all ages in the U.S. It was first identified in 1978 by Diana Pearce in 'Feminization of poverty: women, work and welfare', *Urban social change review*, Feb 1978 and reiterated in the Final Report of the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981).

<sup>22</sup> *Octogesima adveniens*, # 13.

<sup>23</sup> Henriot, DeBerri, and Schultheis, p 21.

<sup>24</sup> Margaret Farley, 'New patterns of relationship' in *Woman: new dimensions*, ed by Walter Burkhardt S.J. (New York, Paulist Press, 1977), p 68.

<sup>25</sup> Farley, p 69.