



Scholarship (English) on the Female Diaconate

Chryssavgis, John. *Remembering and Reclaiming Diakonia: The Diaconate Yesterday and Today*. Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2009. Includes an historical review of the diaconate (mainly focusing on the male diaconate, although there is some mention of the female diaconate) as well as the theological underpinnings for its renewal. The book also includes a number of appendices reviewing the various canons dealing with the diaconate, the vestments, the ordination rite, a listing of deacon saints, and a summary of the present day (male) diaconate in the various Orthodox jurisdictions of the United States.

Echlin, Edward P. *The Deacon in the Church: Past and Future*. New York: The Society of St. Paul, 1971. An historical look at the diaconate from a Western (mainly, Roman Catholic) perspective.

Eisen, Ute E. *Women Officeholders in Early Christianity: Epigraphical and Literary Studies*. Trans. Linda Maloney. Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier/Liturgical Press, 2000. "[A] scholarly investigation of the evidence for women holding offices of authority in the first several centuries of Christianity ... focus[ing] on inscriptions and documentary papyri (private letters, official documents, contracts, and other such pieces) that have scarcely been considered before." [from the publisher]

Elm, Susanna. *"Virgins of God": The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity*. Oxford; New York: Clarendon/Oxford University Press, 1996. An examination of the varieties of ascetic women in early Christianity and their relationship to the institutional church, including a chapter on deaconesses and other ordained and consecrated women's offices.

FitzGerald, Kyriaki Karidoyannes. *Women Deacons in the Orthodox Church: Called to Holiness and Ministry*, Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1998. Includes an historical review of the female diaconate and identifies the charism of the female deacon found in an early Church order, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, as well as the Byzantine ordination rite. The work also traces the decline of the order and points to the benefits of its revival for the church today. In addition, the book includes a number of appendices – a listing a women deacon saints, the text of the Byzantine ordination rite, and excerpts from a number of international consultations focusing on the life of women in the Orthodox Church.

Gryson, Roger. *The Ministry of Women in the Early Church*. Trans. Jean Laporte and Mary Louise Hall. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1976. A relatively early, well-researched examination of women's ministries in early Christianity, including a section on the female diaconate. In an appendix, Gryson responds to arguments against the fully ordained nature of the female diaconate in the early church made by Aimé Georges Martimort.

Karras, Valerie. "Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church." *Church History* 73:2 (June 2004), 272-312. This article by Dr. Karras is an excellent orientation to the scholarship on the topic of female deacons.

_____. "The Liturgical Functions of Consecrated Women in the Byzantine Church." *Theological Studies* 66: 1 (March 2005), 96-116.

Macy, Gary, William T. Ditewig, and Phyllis Zagano. *Women Deacons: Past, Present, Future*. New York; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012. A collection of three essays by the authors on the female diaconate from a Roman Catholic perspective, each one focusing on one of the three time periods, respectively: Macy provides an historical overview (both East and West), Ditewig examines the order since the fathers of Vatican II restored the permanent male diaconate, and Zagano speculates on the future possibility of restoring the female diaconate and what ordination may mean for the identity and ministry of any future female diaconate.

Madigan, Kevin and Carolyn Osiek, eds. and trans. *Ordained Women in the Early Church: A Documentary History*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005. A comprehensive compilation of texts and inscriptions referring to women ordained to the diaconate and other offices in early Christianity, with brief commentary and analysis of each text.

Martimort, Aimé Georges. *Deaconesses: An Historical Study*. Trans. Kenneth D. Whitehead. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986. An exhaustive compilation of original source material on deaconesses in both Eastern and Western Christianity from the New Testament through the medieval period. While valuable for the comprehensiveness of its collection of materials, Martimort's analysis is sometimes skewed by his adherence to modern official Roman Catholic teaching on women and ordination, which he uses as a lens through which to analyze historical material.

Oghlukian, Abel. *The Deaconess in the Armenian Church*. Translated by S. Peter Cowe. New Rochelle, N.Y.: St. Nersess Seminary Press, 1994. A small book providing valuable information on the deaconess in the medieval Armenian church, and on the revival of the Armenian female diaconate in the mid-19th century. It includes several historical photos, including one of a fully vested deaconess holding a liturgical fan.

Tavard, George H. *Woman in Christian Tradition*. Trans. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975. Not a purely historical work, Tavard uses the historical material to reflect theologically on the nature of woman and the variety of roles women have played and may play within the church.

Vassiliadis, Petros, et.al., eds. *Deaconesses, the Ordination of Women and Orthodox Theology*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017. The book includes 40 chapters based on papers at the international conference of the same name, held in Thessaloniki, Greece, January 22-24, 2015. The conference was held at the Center of Ecumenical Missiological, and Environmental Studies (CEMES). This is a collection of vast breadth and depth, which shows how extensively this issue has been studied from a theological and historical perspective. Excerpts from the volume are available on the St. Phoebe website (below).

Zagano, Phyllis. *Women in Ministry: Emerging Questions About the Diaconate*. New York: Paulist Press, 2012. A look at the question of the restoration of the female diaconate from the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church after Vatican II. Dr. Zagano also looks at the ecumenical implications of women deacons in the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Orthodox Church of Greece, and the Union of Utrecht Old Catholic Churches. Lastly, she explains the implications of an ordained ministry for women's participation in the governance and liturgy of the Roman Church.

_____, ed. *Ordination of Women to the Diaconate in the Eastern Churches: Essays by Cipriano Vagaggini*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013. A translation of two important articles from the 1970's by Italian scholar Cipriano Vagaggini which summarize the deaconess in the Byzantine tradition. The articles include foundational texts and canons, and they discuss the distinction between *cheirotomia* (ordination to major orders) and *cheirothesia* (blessing, or ordination to minor orders), concluding that the deaconess was indeed a member of the major orders of clergy (i.e. ordained to the higher orders of "priesthood" in its broad sense: bishop, presbyter, and deacon).

Additional materials can be found on the St. Phoebe website at:
<https://orthodoxdeaconess.org/resources/>