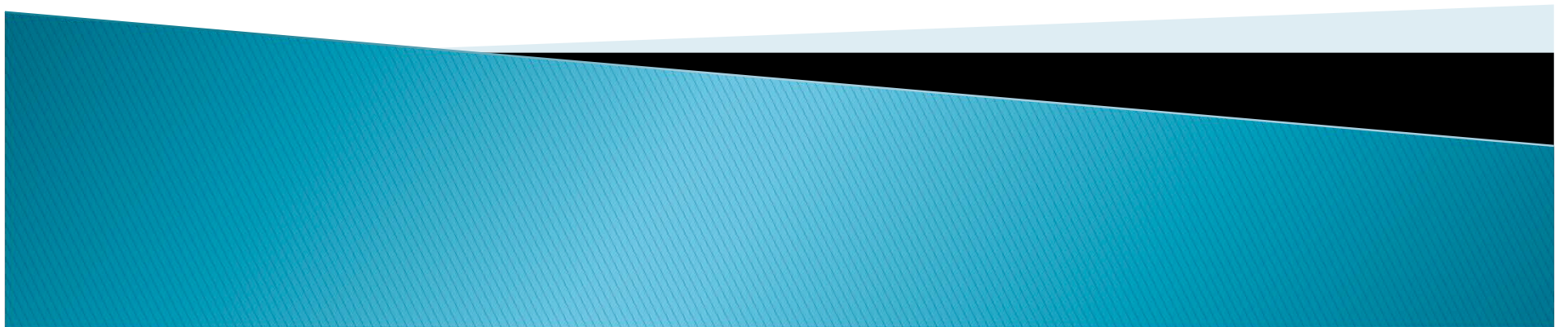


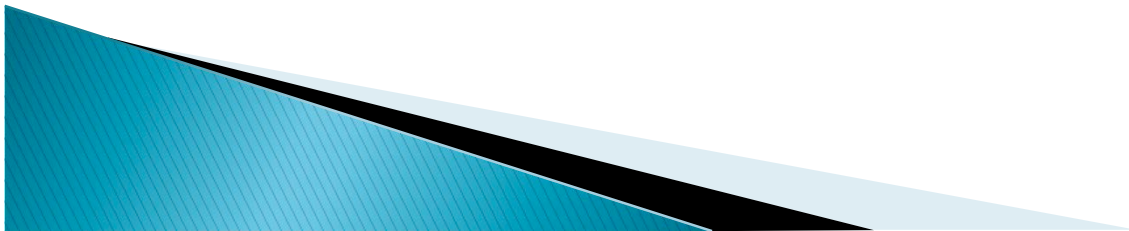
The Calls for the Renewal of the Female Diaconate

And what this means for renewing the
Diaconate—Male and Female



Second Prayer of Ordination (excerpt)

- ▶ Master and Lord, You do not reject women who offer themselves, and by divine counsel, to minister as is fitting to your holy houses, but you accept them in the order of ministers. Give the grace of your Holy Spirit to this servant of Your also who wishes to offer herself to you and to accomplish the grace of the diaconate, as You gave the grace of Your diaconate to Phoebe, whom you called to the work of ministry...

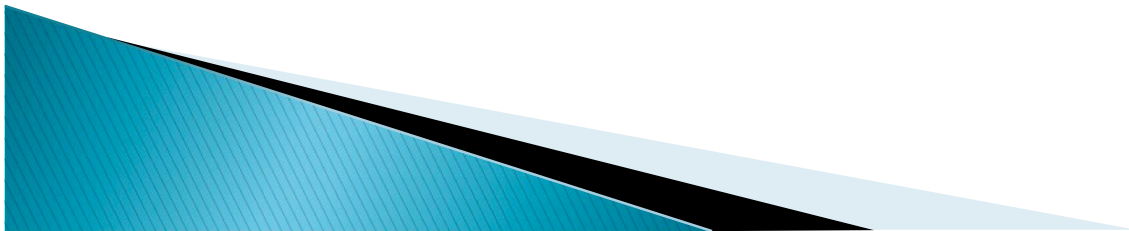


St. Phoebe



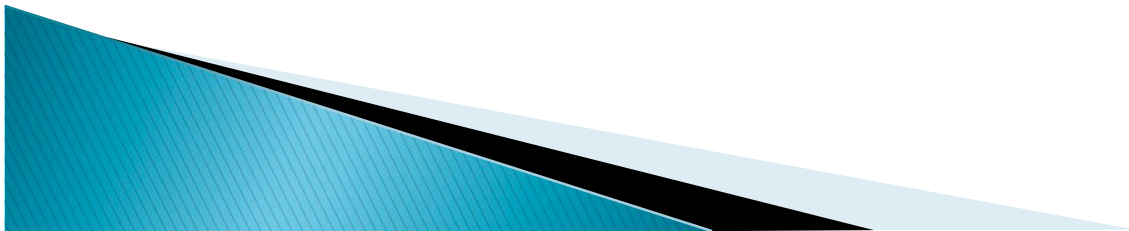
Byzantine Inheritance of Female Diaconate

- ▶ Ordination to major orders
- ▶ Ordained by Bishop during Eucharist
- ▶ Ordained at the Altar
- ▶ (At the same point as the male deacon)
- ▶ Received Orarion
- ▶ Received Holy Communion at the Altar with other clergy



The Diaconate

- ▶ One of three expressions of “priesthood”
- ▶ Bishop/Episcopos
 - overseer of community
 - Center of visible unity
 - Spokesman for traditional doctrine
- ▶ Priest/Presbyter
 - Serves the local community
 - Minister of Word and Sacrament
- ▶ Deacon
 - Ministry of Service (e.g. pastoral care, philanthropic outreach, reading of Scriptures and liturgical service)
 - Grounded in the way that the church meets the world



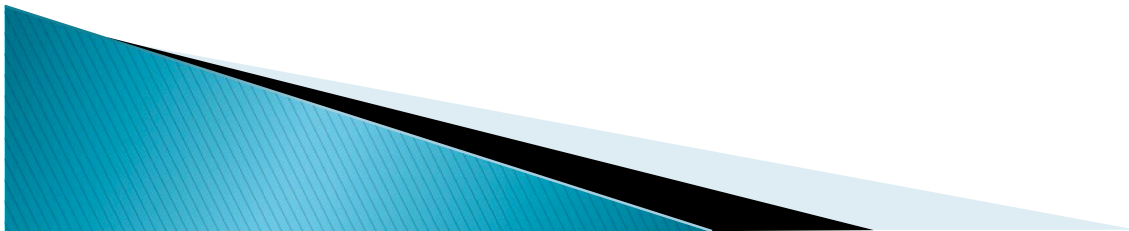
Modern Renewal of the office

- ▶ Armenian Church



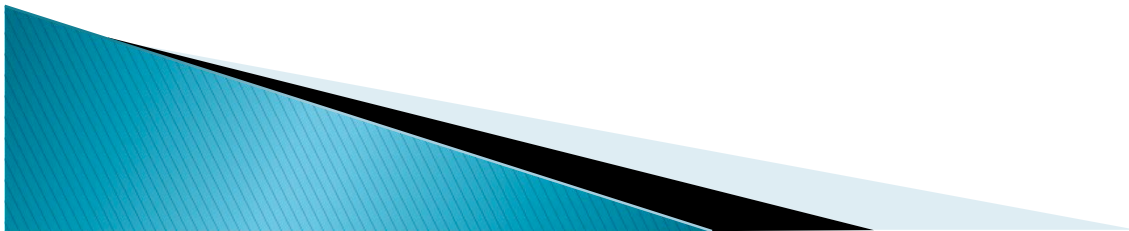
Calls for Renewal...

- ▶ Late 19th c → Russia
- ▶ Early 20th c → Greece (St. Nektarios)
- ▶ Mid 20th c → Archbishop Michael (GOA)
 - Archbishop Iakovos
- ▶ International Conferences (ex.)
 - Agapia (1976)
 - Rhodes (1988)
 - Crete (1990)
 - Damascus (1996)
 - Istanbul (1997)
 - Volos (2008)



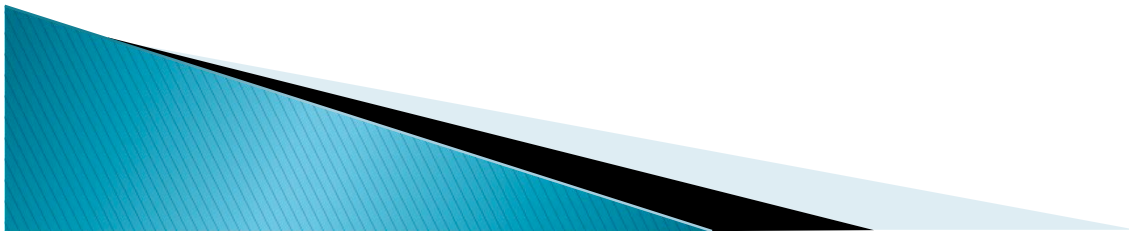
Calls for Renewal – continued

- ▶ Importance of Rhodes (1988)
 - Official Orthodox Consultation
 - Called by Ecu. Patriarch Demetrios I
 - Attended by official church delegates and experts
 - Among conclusions—> “order of deaconess should be revived”
 - “represent a positive response to the many needs and demands of the contemporary world”



Calls for Renewal – continued

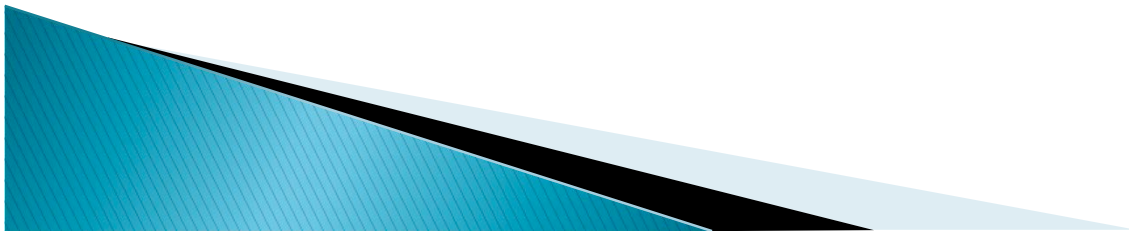
- ▶ Work in France (2000)
 - Year long study
 - Elisabeth Behr–Sigel, Fr. Boris Bobrinskoy, Olivier Clément, Nicolas Lossky
 - Quotes Patriarch Bartholmew, “no obstacle in canon law that stands in the way of the ordination of women to the diaconate. This institution of the early Church deserves to be revitalized.”
 - Revitalized in context of culture and requirements of present day



Calls for Renewal – continued

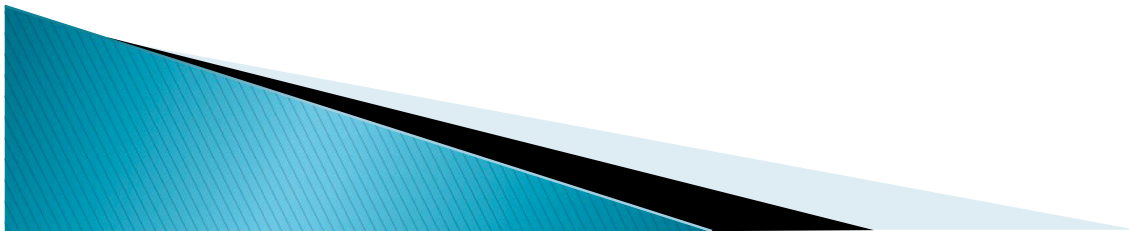
▶ Follow on Conferences

- “Deaconesses, Ordination of Women and Orthodox Theology” — Thessaloniki, 2015
- “Deaconess: Past, Present, Future” —Thessaloniki, 2020



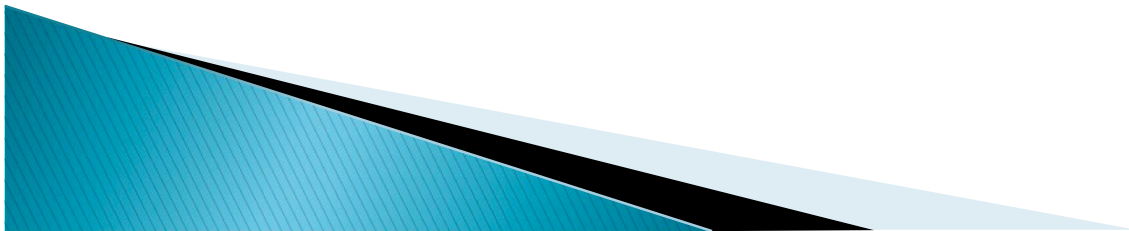
Rejuvenate Diaconate for Female *and* Male

- ▶ Recommendations of Crete (1990)
 - Lead people in prayer
 - Give spiritual counsel
 - Help to distribute Holy Communion
 - Meet the needs of the Church in a changing world
 - Catechetical work
 - Pastoral care
 - Anointing infirm
 - Missionary work
 - Ministering to the sick...
 - *“A creative restoration of the diaconate for women, we hope will lead in turn to the renewal in the diaconate for men...”*



Imagine....

- ▶ What *might* this look like...



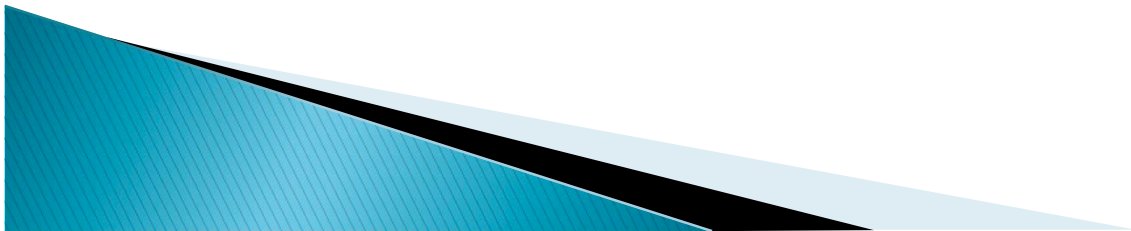
What do Deacons do?

Dcn. Nicholas Denysenko



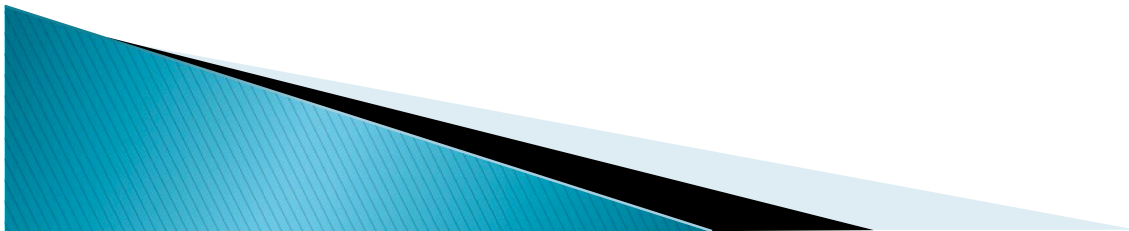
Observations

- ▶ No uniform standard for diaconal ministry
- ▶ Many parish presbyters do not understand diaconal ministry
- ▶ The Church seems to have lost its sense of the diaconate as a holy order



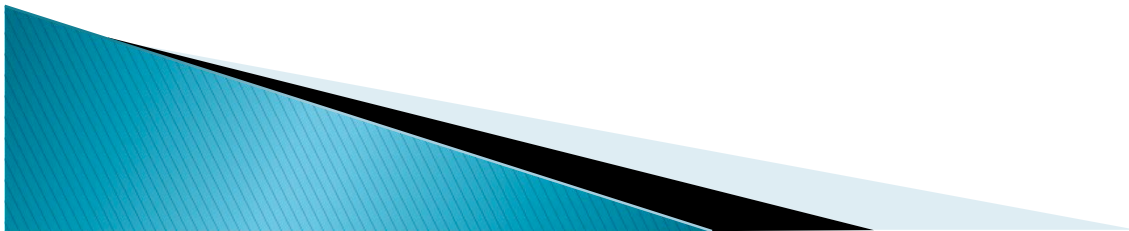
The Eucharist as the Foundation of Diaconal Ministry

- ▶ Assist the Presider in completing the preparation of the gifts to be offered
- ▶ Perform ritual incensation of temple
- ▶ Direct the prayers of the Assembly
- ▶ Restoration—> Distribute Holy Communion
 - Connected to the ministry of the sick



Presidency of Liturgical Offices?

- ▶ Role: Assist, not preside
- ▶ Typica service with Communion from Presanctified Gifts
- ▶ Liturgy of the Hours
- ▶ Proposed:
 - Funeral/Burial
 - Short Memorial (panikhida)
 - Molieben/Paraklesis
 - Blessing of Homes with Holy Water
 - Hear confessions (reconciliation by priest/bishop)



What Deacons Can Do

- ▶ Preside over the preparation of the gifts in their entirety
 - Connected with home visits
- ▶ Lead ministry of visitation with communion and anointing
- ▶ Preside at services of Communion of Pre-sanctified Gifts, Liturgy of Hours, Memorial services, funerals, house blessings as needed
- ▶ Deaconess → assist in leading prayer, proclaiming God's word, extending the sacramental ministries into the community

