



*St Phoebe Center*  
FOR THE DEACONESS



**Deaconesses for the Orthodox Church Today**  
**Sponsored by the St. Phoebe Center for the Deaconess**

*In honor of St. Phoebe Center's 10th Anniversary*  
*November 10-12, 2023*  
*Maliotis Cultural Center, Holy Cross Hellenic College*

**Friday, November 10, 2023**

**6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Registration/check-in**

**7:00 pm – 8:30 pm**

**Deaconesses for the Orthodox Church Today: The History, the Need, and the Future**

Opening Prayer and Welcome: His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago  
Welcome from Holy Cross Hellenic College: President George Cantonis

Keynote: St Phoebe Center Chair Dr. Carrie Frederick Frost  
Deaconesses for the Orthodox Church Today: The History, the Need, and the Future

Respondent: Archdeacon John Chryssavgis

*This keynote will briefly review the history of deaconesses in the Orthodox Church, the need for them today, St. Phoebe Center's history, and the legacy of the Rhodes Consultation of 1988 and other contemporary calls for deaconesses but will largely focus on how the Orthodox Church might go about restoring this vital order that is so essential for its health and future. It will be open to the general public and will include time for discussion. All present will be invited to attend the events of the next day, when possible processes for ordaining deaconesses once again will be discussed in more depth.*

**8:30 pm – 9:30 pm: Wine and cheese reception.**

**Saturday, November 11, 2023**

**8:00 am – 8:30 am**

Registration/check-in  
Coffee and light breakfast fare provided.

**8:30 am – 9:00 am**

**Morning Prayers**

**9:00 am – 10:30 am**

**Calls for Deaconesses and Women's Ministry in the Church**

Moderator: Ms. Sara Tsugranis

Panelists:

Dr. Teva Regule

Ms. Sophia Kyrou

Dr. Ioana Popa

*The call to revive the female diaconate is not new in the life of the Orthodox Church. This session will present the numerous calls to do so from the modern period. It will also highlight the many ways that lay women are currently serving in diaconal-type capacities. While acknowledging that these ministries are important in and of themselves, this session will further explain why ordination is valuable and necessary to participate more fully in the diaconal ministry of the Church.*

**10:30 am – 11:00 am**

**Coffee Break**

**11:00am – 12:30pm**

**Can Women go in the Altar?: Addressing the Myths around Ordaining Deaconesses**

Moderator: Ms. Kristina Baktis

Panelists:

Dr. Valerie Karras

Rev. Dr. Philip Zymaris

Dr. Paul Ladouceur

*This session will directly engage with concerns and incorrect teachings about the revival of the ordained order of deaconesses in the Orthodox Church, addressing such issues as: the unfounded but wide-spread belief that women are not allowed in the altar, lingering and theologically indefensible connections between women's bodies and impurity, and "slippery slope" concerns about deaconesses leading to women priests.*

**12:30 pm – 1:30 pm**

**Catered lunch**

**1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**How to Restore the Ordained Order of Deaconesses Today: Proposed Guidelines**

Moderator: Ms. Ann Marie and Mr. Gust Mecera

Speakers: Rev. Dr. Perry Hamalis and Dr. Carrie Frederick Frost

Respondents: His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago, Dr. James Skedros, and Dr. Elizabeth Prodromou

*The St. Phoebe Center will propose and discuss a process by which the Orthodox Church might restore the ordained order of deaconesses today to minister to needs in the church and the world, acknowledging the importance for the renewal of the entire diaconate.*

**3:30 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Coffee Break**

**4:00 pm – 5:15 pm**

**Ways to Advocate for Deaconesses**

Moderator: Dr. Teva Regule

Breakout groups led by St. Phoebe Center Board Members representatives from Axia Women:

- How to increase roles of women and girls in your parish
- How to address myths and misleading information about Deaconesses
- How to hold an event about Deaconesses
- How to include Deaconesses in Church School curricula

*This workshop session will offer practical ways that attendees can help the St. Phoebe Center advocate for deaconesses in the Orthodox Church today.*

**5:15 pm – 5:30 pm**

**Break**

**5:30 pm – 6:30 pm**

**Celebration of Women's Ministry in the Orthodox Church**

*This celebration will not be explanatory like the above sessions, but a joyful and hopeful opportunity for attendees to pray together, honoring women's service to the church today and looking to a future of the Orthodox Church in which women's ministries are more fully expressed. The St. Phoebe Award will be presented to Ms. Marilyn Rouvelas.*

Light appetizer reception to follow.

**Sunday, November 12**

**10:00 am – 1:30 pm:** Liturgy at 10 am followed by luncheon and debrief of the symposium.

(Luncheon hosted by parish.)

St. Mary Orthodox Church

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