

Session Two Handout

Women's Ministry inspired by Scripture

Introduction

Do the Scriptures teach us of a distinctive feminine ministry that has its own graces?

The presence of male and female in creation

Women of ministry in the Old Testament

Rebecca, Rachel, Tamar, Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Ruth, Esther, Judith

Reflection and discussion

It is worth spending some time reading the lives of these great figures of our faith. As you read their stories try to understand how God was working through them especially in terms of how these are ministries of women.

Women in the Early Church

- The Order of Deaconess
- Not called but responsive and receptive
- Freedom in the Holy Spirit
- The symbol of the gifts and life of the Holy Spirit

Women in the Early Church

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Comparing the foot washing

- The Apostles are taught to imitate
- The woman acts out of devotion

Freedom and the Gifts of the Spirit

- The deaconess is not confined or institutionalised
- The Spirit is not confined or institutionalised
- The Spirit is ever active in creation
- 'Let her alone,' says Our Lord
- Women as the doorkeeper

Discussion

How might the institution of the Church be enlivened and challenged by this vision of a ministry that speaks of bearing the gifts of the Spirit to the world? What could such a ministry mean to those who live or work in your own parish?

S. Mary Magdalene

- Not an Apostle as she has her own vital witness and ministry
- She symbolises the angel's message in her being of the release and freedom of the Spirit into the Church.