



PRESENTATION OF THE PLENARY

to Pope Francis



Your Holiness,

In its journey of research along the paths joining the waymarks that map out contemporary society, after having looked at the complex and variegated horizon of youth culture beginning with their languages (musical, digital and sportive), the Pontifical Council for Culture has decided now to enter into another vast, rich and changing landscape: the world of women's cultures, an expression that is conventional and also perhaps debatable. Ours is, though, a desire to show an awareness that there exists a "vision" of being and existing, of the world, and of life and experience that belongs to women.

This is a perspective that is not separate or alternate with respect to the male one, but has its own originality that in the past was often ignored if not oppressed and which has not yet been fully understood and valued. Sometimes, in fact, it is radicalised and exasperated, other times it is homologated to the dominant masculine model. Four cardinal points were taken for our analysis, which was prepared by a propaedeutic journey and developed in these last few days under the guide and accompaniment of a group of women who expressed the multiple variety of the feminine commitment to family, society, work and culture.

Firstly, the quest for an equilibrium between equality and difference; then "generativity" as a symbolic code that goes beyond the mere biological question; third, the female body, a sign that is not only physiological but cultural, and finally, the presence of women in the Church with their active participation. These were the four trajectories of a first reflection that will see further journeys in the future of our Dicastery including with the collaboration of a permanent women's consultation group.

The members, consultants and advisors who participated directly or indirectly in this project are now here with You, Holy Father, to put a seal on this first stage with your message and your benediction. In this itinerary we have the fundamental guidance of the Word of God which is full of smiling and suffering, active and humiliated female figures, which at the end admonishes us with a truth that is ultimate and basic. The "image" of God the creator is in the union and in the love of man and woman (Genesis 1:27) and in the Christian faith "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for we are all one in Christ Jesus." (Cf. Galatians 3:28)

Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi

7 February 2015

Service by our colleagues at Vatican Radio (including a translation of the Pope's own talk):

<http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-urges-more-widespread-and-incisive-female-pre>