



## 48. Typical Differences between Man and Woman

*Actually it should be beyond question that our sex sets its stamp on our individual character. The discussions of the last decades, right up until today, have increasingly questioned this statement. For instance, a world conference on "Gender" came to the conclusion that the differentiation between the sexes was purely a social phenomenon, and that people may therefore realize themselves in their interpersonal relationships in whichever role they choose. The tradition handed down to us from the past centuries has been so seriously called into question that many, even representatives of the Christian tradition, have become confused and no longer adopt a clear stance in these matters.*

*Throughout his life Fr Kentenich followed up this question about the originality of the sexes and their relation to each other, and took up a clear stand to it. In doing so he did not so much start with traditional teaching; rather, he based his stance on his observations of actual life over many years. His findings and his teaching are clear, but also very carefully weighed up. Man and woman, he said, are equal in value (gleichwertig), but they do not have the same nature (gleichartig). The differentiation between the two sexes creates clear categories that help us to know ourselves and others, but it does not lay down a fixed and uniform pattern of behaviour for the individual person. Each individual person is an original mixture of both types. The differences between masculine and feminine characteristics are typical, and can be clearly recognised, but they set their stamp on each person in an original and individual way, although the average woman has a feminine character and the average man has a masculine character. Both require complementation.*

*The text quoted here has been taken from the so-called "Milwaukee Tertianship" of 1962-3 (Vol. VIII, p. 213-234; vol. IX, p.13-31). This was a training course lasting three months for seven seminarians who were prepared to co-operate in founding the new "pars motrix et centralis", the present Schoenstatt Fathers.*

*When we read the text we should keep two things in mind. In the first place, the Tertianship was conducted for young men who wanted to become priests, and hence wanted to live a celibate way*

*of life. This explains why certain things were highlighted in the present text. Fr Kentenich would have placed the emphasis differently if he had been talking to a group of couples. Secondly, Fr Kentenich was speaking to a small group during a time of formation and training, and this made it possible for him to use a more familiar and intimate tone. So the talks in the Milwaukee Tertianship are very original and almost form a literary genre of their own. We could characterize them as “conversational conferences”. The argument is not so strictly logical, the way of speaking more relaxed, structure and syntax are more disjointed. For the editors this presented a particular challenge. On the one hand, it was more necessary than with other texts to tighten up the presentation, bring greater order into the line of thinking, and correct and clarify the choice of words and grammar. The valuable thoughts had to be presented to the reader in a way that flowed well. On the other hand, the editors had to preserve the literary genre, so that Fr Kentenich’s originality and conversational tone could still shine through. This more relaxed way of teaching had a unique effect on those present. The conversational tone and often very entertaining presentation made it possible for profound truths to sink in without their really being aware of it. As Fr Kentenich put it, it was a “steady drizzle” that gradually soaked the earth of the soul without washing anything away. This is a text through which you can study the founder, but also encounter him as a person.*

We want to gain an insight. Ultimately into ourselves, just as we are and how we would like to be. If I am not deceiving myself, our self-knowledge has grown in every respect. So it is a good thing that all we have discussed together can be compared with a “steady drizzle”. If we want to look into the depths, we have always to be still; otherwise it causes too much confusion.

Let us gain an insight! So what do we want to see now? The great ideal of the Immaculata atmosphere, of priestly purity and intactness. We have been able to look more deeply into the crises love can go through. We looked at them, on the one hand, in the context of the different periods in our lives, and, on the other, in relation to people, to be more precise, the opposite sex.

We now want to know: How can we describe the inherent qualities<sup>1</sup> of womanhood? Unless we try as early as possible to experience the qualities in woman, she could one day become a serious crisis for us.

So how can we describe the inherent qualities of womanhood? We want to give two groups of answers.

First of all an answer more in principle. I have deliberately said that it is more in principle. If I refer to the principle in every question, I take it for granted that we always see the principles personified and connected with life.

Secondly, more plastically. Please note the word “more”. We are dealing with a change in emphasis. So when the illustration begins, the principle is always in the background.

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<sup>1</sup> In German “*Werhaftigkeit*”

### [An answer more in principle]

So, first of all, something in principle. We want to contrast the nature of woman and the nature of man using three formulations. Things cast light on each other when they are contrasted.

Now you naturally may not think that you will find a woman or a man in such a pure form as I am describing it here. Yesterday we talked about the *Materia quantitate signata*.<sup>2</sup> The soul as such is undifferentiated in a sexual sense. It becomes either masculine or feminine through being joined to a specifically masculine or feminine body.

Psychologists and doctors have meanwhile got to know the extreme case of the hermaphrodite, where it is not clear whether the body is that of a girl or a boy.

To some extent we are all more or less hermaphrodites. There are countless variations.

In the main I want to describe the qualities of womanhood, and only shed one or the other light on the nature of manhood in contrast.

What I have just said about hermaphrodites can already be found in Adam and Eve.

God the Lord created them in such a way that they had to complement each other in some way or other.

Nevertheless, there is hermaphroditism that comes close to being **an ontological revolution**. We all experience revolutions in how we act, but when this revolution negates the differentiation between the sexes too greatly, we come close to an ontological revolution. Of course, it is impossible to revolutionise our being completely, but even the tendency to do so is the most dangerous thing we can envisage, because it will destroy our being. Today the danger is great that we have neither boys nor girls, but – the expressions have been used for decades – boys trying to be girls and girls trying to be boys. It is a tragedy! Unless we men try to exemplify the ideal of manhood, and unless women do the same with the ideal of womanhood, we will lack that psychological element that attracts the sexes to each other. There will no longer be a relationship between two poles. This will lead to all sorts of psychological illnesses.

So now let us give the first answer and contrast the two sexes. I want to refer back to the Bible. There we see Adam. God had created him. And then the folk up there<sup>3</sup> considered, “It is not good for man to be alone. Let us create a suitable partner for him, who is his equal”.<sup>4</sup>

Here you have a manifestation of the ontological order: It is not good for human beings/man to be alone. Let us make him a female partner – not a male partner – who is equal to him, but not identical to him. God had created angels, the earth, the air, and all sorts of things. But Adam’s partner was to be his equal.

Taking this as our standpoint, let us now think in very supernatural and meta-physical terms. This statement then refers ultimately to Jesus and Mary. According to St Paul, Christ is pre-eminent in

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<sup>2</sup> Matter is defined by quantity and expansion.

<sup>3</sup> Fr Kantenich was using a typical colloquial German expression that fitted to his conversational tone. From the context it is possible to work out what is meant, in this instance “the folk up there” has to refer to the Blessed Trinity.

<sup>4</sup> Gen 2,18.

the objective order; in the creation and government of the world he is the first-born of all. He comes before every created thing.<sup>5</sup>

Those words also apply to Christ: It is not good for him to be alone. We want to create a partner for him, the Blessed Mother.

From this it follows that Adam and Eve were created according to this image, not vice versa. This metaphysical transposition is in keeping with the objective order of salvation and is based on the Sacred Scriptures.<sup>6</sup>

Let us immediately immerse into life all the ideas we have considered together. When Adam opened his eyes after God had created him, what did he see? He saw the whole of creation around him. He was probably very surprised when he opened his eyes. Think of all he must have seen!

And once Eve had been called into life, what was the first thing she saw? Her gaze fell first of all on Adam, that is, a person. From this we can conclude that by virtue of the way in which she was created, woman is naturally more strongly attached to the personal than man. This doesn't mean that it isn't also there in man. However, Adam – there wasn't a woman there yet – first saw his fill of creation. Then he discovered a woman beside him, although in second place. With that we have already characterised a large part of manhood and womanhood.

Plato passed on an ancient legend that contains valuable truths. According to this legend the first human couple were combined in one flesh, that is, they were not two people. When this person committed sin, God punishment was to separate this person into two. That is why the two parts are always striving to be united again. This gives expression to the truth that according to their mode of being and mission, man and woman are dependent on each other, they complement each other.

That is the meaning of marriage – to grow into each other ontologically, and to complement each other in life. God did not create the whole fullness of humanity in one type, although the fullness is seminally contained in each type. In order to develop this fullness they depend on each other.

Since we celibates give up this development of ourselves through a woman, which corresponds with our nature, we are given the task to find this complementation in ourselves. Which of us is exclusively masculine in his orientation? We are always a mixture. If we are to become a community of fathers, it has to be our ideal to complement and complete our fatherliness by the motherliness in ourselves.

Besides this, the two sexes are always attracted to each other as if by a magnetic field. Let us suppose you love another man, and also love a woman – we may also do so; we have not promised never to love a woman. If you love both the man and the woman to the same degree, the love you have for a woman nevertheless takes on a different form, especially as far as your feelings are concerned, to the love you have for a man. It is the most natural thing in the world that there are

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<sup>5</sup> "For in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is **before all things**, and in him all things hold together" (Col 1, 16ff.).

<sup>6</sup> In other expositions Fr Kentenich often referred in this context to an ancient theological axiom: *Primum in intentione est ultimum in executione* – the first in the intention is (often) the last in the execution.

magnetic fields that attract us to each other, sometimes more strongly, sometimes less strongly. We then understand ourselves better.

Let us start with woman. If we go into details, there are four elements that have to be emphasised in particular. When we are dealing with actual people, we have to remember that there is a mixture in both women and men, although it is not always easy to discover what it is.

### **First difference: Intuitive and discursive thinking**

How can we describe the intellect, will and heart of a woman? And vice versa: How can we describe the intellect, the will and heart of a man? Please keep in mind that we are typifying all the time. It can well happen that a man has a more strongly developed feminine way of thinking than all the women we know.

Normally woman thinks intuitively, while man thinks discursively. The technical terms could differ from the way I have put it. In a living language you must always first discern the meaning expressed by the concept. Others say that women have more person-directed intelligence, men more task-directed intelligence. In this case intelligence in woman has to be interpreted in the way indicated by the concept: *intus legere*.<sup>7</sup>

We want to keep to the other concepts, because we know them better and also because they are more easily understood. Intuitive thinking views everything as a whole; it is thinking in pictures. Typical feminine thinking is circular. Masculine thinking is discursive, it places one block next to the other.

Man takes one building block, thinks that thought through, fetches another building block and then another. In the end we have a pyramid. Then the man still finds it difficult to turn the pyramid into a circle. Woman instinctively sees a picture, and then immediately next to it some more.

You may not overlook that this is a generalisation, otherwise we won't get it right. There is hardly any instance when it is classically present.

So woman finds organic thinking easier than a man does, because it is in keeping with her predisposition. Take, for example, the big difficulties at the Visitation, because the word "Father" was used for both the heavenly and earthly Father. If you know the soul of women, and read their spontaneous prayers, you will take it for granted from the moment you think in a feminine way that when they mention the earthly Father in prayers, they always include the heavenly Father. It can take quite some time for a man to move from the block to the circle, and then for a second and third circle to be added to it. Since I had been working with women for decades, this was my school, not books. That is why a woman, if she prays very simply, will always turn to the Blessed Mother. You can be sure that sound people will have a strongly feminine way of thinking. So you can learn a lot from ordinary people in this regard. You can learn more than from academics, because they have often distorted and displaced things badly. A mother can kneel before our Blessed Mother's picture and pray to her, but the whole supernatural world will resonate in that prayer; of course, not in a reflected way. For woman, if she has been brought up in a religious way to some extent, nature and supernature are strongly related; they form an organic entity.

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<sup>7</sup> Literally: To read inwardly, but here indicates the intuitive ability to read between the lines, to pick up the unspoken

Now you need to consider: How is this with me? Do I think in a distinctively masculine way, or in a distinctively feminine way? Is my disposition more intuitive or more discursive? Or are both present in a corresponding mixture?

It is difficult for someone whose thinking is extremely discursive to really love someone warmly. Such people love with the will. If the heart speaks, they are afraid that their heart could disturb their thinking. Can you imagine what that means? The fear is: If I am fond of someone, the danger is too great that my thinking will no longer be sufficiently grounded; it won't be discursive enough.

On the other hand, the person who has an intuitive disposition always has a warm heart; their heart is fully developed. You will always notice that people who are extremely masculine in their thinking also lack something in their heart in some way.

You may not overlook the practical consequence. To the extent that I possess a feminine way of thinking, I will have to rely far more on the purity of my heart, because heart and mind are more strongly connected than we would like to admit. Intuitive thinking awakens the *agere a natura* in the will far more than the *agere a proposito*.<sup>8</sup>

When we are educating a feminine disposition – in women or ourselves – we have to set great store by the purification of the feelings, because virtually everything is instinctively determined by the emotions, not by resolutions. This is important in view of the vision of the truth, quite apart from other things.

With the Sisters I decided that they had to have a course in philosophy in the Tertianship. This didn't aim at changing their way of thinking, but at giving them practice in "building block thinking" as a complementation.

As far as celibate people are concerned, it has always been my ideal to form a person who is as whole as possible, who can find a balance within themselves.

Here you can see, for example, the importance of the father principle for a community of women, although this on its own isn't sufficient in a big community to provide complementation. Each individual member has also to be trained to think discursively, that is, they have to learn "building block thinking".

You must also train yourselves in very practical terms by considering together, or else on your own, how an ideal woman you know – or also a confrère – thinks. Is it this way or that?

Such training will help you to understand yourselves better, so that you can then find a fitting special resolution that will ennoble your disposition. It has to be your disposition. Don't simply choose just anything, sometimes this, sometimes that. Otherwise the masses will determine what you are. The special resolution has to be something really individual.

So I have to ask myself how things are with me. Am I more strongly characterised by the *agere a natura*, or by the *agere a proposito*? If I work more strongly with the *agere a natura*, I will need times in my life when I practice the *agere a proposito* in an extreme way. Whoever is by nature focussed on the *agere a proposito*, must also educate himself in such a way that he more easily dispenses himself from something; otherwise he will become inflexible and obsessive. In a community it is always a blessing if there is a good mixture, so that one has this disposition and

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<sup>8</sup> Acting in harmony with (the inclinations) of nature; acting as a result of a decision or resolution.

another that. However, it is a good thing if the leader of a community has an understanding for these things and knows how to hold the reins for a six-in-hand, that is, a coach drawn by six horses.

Think, for example, of Joseph Engling and how he carried out his spiritual daily order with *agere a proposito*. Which of us can manage to uphold such a fullness of points reflexively and deliberately in our normal everyday lives? Which woman could manage it? So we have to be careful – we can't all be the same. On the one hand, he was very intuitive in his way of thinking, and he was borne by tremendous love. That was his *agere a natura*. Deliberate and spontaneous actions were often very closely connected.

Let us take a sideglance at the superiors and their way of government. Are we dealing with a spiritual director or a superior? Who would you prefer? As the spiritual accompanier, probably someone whose disposition is directed to the *agere a natura*. He is able to adapt himself to others, he leaves freedom and can wait. If the same person were my superior, the danger is great that he would let too much go, because it is difficult for such a person to be disciplined and keep things in order, so it is also difficult for him to maintain order in the community.

On the whole, a community of men far prefers to have a superior who can maintain discipline in the community. Why? Because man by nature is not so oriented to the personal. He far prefers to submit to an objective order that is upheld without wavering. That is why it is often said: masculine discipline is like that in the army. Of course, that is exaggerated. Nevertheless, man far prefers to submit to an objective norm and order than to a person. Of course, the ideal is to connect the two, isn't it?

### **Second difference: The will and style of leadership – guide and direct**

The second difference focuses on the will. If I now try – somewhat helplessly – to make a semantic difference between guiding and directing. Men are far more inclined to direct and women to guide.

By directing we mean – again it is exaggerated – that I dictate: So and not otherwise! Stop it! Come hell or high water, or I'll twist your neck!

In contrast, guiding is inner leadership. I guide the heart and mind.

Now, those who by nature have the ability to guide have an extraordinary ability to be spiritual guides. They are able to guide the soul slowly without overpowering it.

Perhaps you will feel inspired to think of your father and mother at home. Or, let us take Hans<sup>9</sup> as an example. Is he better suited to directing or to guiding? Or does his nature have a good mixture?

This is where self-education starts. If I only wanted to develop myself without any restraint, something decent could still result. After all, God is still there and he is able to write straight on crooked lines.

However, we must also see to it that we have ourselves in hand, we have to examine ourselves to see where our strengths lie, and where our weaknesses. If we are honest and know ourselves, we will not be so easily inclined to stone someone else. He has one mixture, I have another.

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<sup>9</sup> The reference here is to the late Hans Kulgemeyer, who was Rector of the Tertianship at the time. The "mixture" probably applied to him.

Later on, when you have to appoint people to certain offices, it will be most important to ask: Is my confrère better suited to this, or to that? If I have to appoint someone to a position to which he is absolutely unsuited, I can tell him: God has ordained it. Cheers! Yet as the superior I also have the duty to think along with God. And since God has given a confrère certain qualities, I have also to use him as far as possible according to his qualities.

Again, this is the ideal. Where will I find a man who is exactly suited to a certain position? However I may also not fall into the other extreme and ask: Where is a hole? Where is a man available? Into that hole! At least I have to think! If I cannot find someone who is created to fill this position, I will have to take someone who is still relatively the best suited to the circumstances. Above all the leaders have to note this. A great deal depends on it.

Think of the well-known axiom: Nothing without you, nothing without us. Of course, God is behind it. But we have to do our share. And if the wisdom of guiding and directing is supernatural wisdom, God will adapt himself to our misery and our abilities. To use a picture – God is a coachman who guides the carriage of world history. The earthly father has to be a reflection of our guiding God the Father in his work of leadership. If he does it correctly, he will awaken reverence for the will of the Eternal Father.<sup>10</sup>

Please consider: Where is the difference with regard to the will? On the one hand man – what does he want? He wants to lead, to govern, to be in the foreground. That is also his task. Just as God is both – as the coachman, he determines the route of the coach, he directs the coach of world events – the father has to be a reflection of God the Father who directs life. So he is also suited, if he does it correctly, to awakening reverence for the will of the Eternal Father.

We have already spoken about *auctoritas externa* and *interna*.<sup>11</sup> True authority connects the two: *auctoritas externa* – the power to govern; *auctoritas interna* – the power to guide. I have to be the author, the former, the moulder of life, but at the same time I have to direct, guide and lead. Please consider: What is my main quality? So what do I have to do, how must I behave?

If you think of a woman whom you honour, where does her influence come from? Women often exercise a greater influence on a man than a man would. Why? Men like to allow themselves to be guided by what a person is, by service.

With regard to the education of our youth, we can see the pros and cons. If the sexes are educated separately, there is a greater probability that the boys will be more masculine, even if they are louts, and that the girls will be more feminine. In my opinion, if there is greater polarity, marriage is more strongly safeguarded.

Of course, you could then argue that through co-education there will not be so much anxiety and strain in a relationship.

You have to see both sides and then try to take the good points of both and exclude the less good.

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<sup>10</sup> The intention of this paragraph is that man is meant to be God's image and likeness in governing the world. Fr Kenenich associated this with the image of the coachman and then noticed that he had departed from his own terminological differentiation by which he attributed "guiding" to woman and "directing" to man. So he applied both to the coachman, which doubtlessly is correct in relation to God, but also to man if we are not trying to work out the typical differences between man and woman.

<sup>11</sup> External and internal authority.



All in all, then, I think we have spent enough time considering the two contrasting positions.

### **Third difference: introvert – extrovert**

A third comparison. It involves mind, will and heart. So if I ask – I am again generalising: How can we describe the structure of man and woman? I would have to say that man is more strongly extroverted and woman more strongly introverted.

Let me explain what I mean. Man is an extrovert because he likes outward activity. If I want to study the distinctive nature of man and woman, I have to take the specific qualities of the body as a starting point. Why? Because the difference between the sexes is determined by the body. I have to see the sexual organs of man and woman symbolically. You will find that because man's sexual organs are outside the body – we can already guess that it is true to say that man is naturally more extroverted – his orientation is outside himself. So if as a distinctive man I am extroverted, I will have to reckon with it that, on the one hand, I am somewhat superficial, and, on the other, I am highly ambitious. These are the qualities that become more visible in men today than in the past.

Woman is by nature more introverted. That is to say, by her disposition she is more inclined to look within herself. Allow me to remind you of the physiological basis for this: the specific sexual organs of woman are all within. In men they are outside the body.

Since time immemorial it has been said that by nature woman is more religious. We could start by saying that this isn't true. We could reply that man is also religious. We take this for granted. From the start we have said that a disposition is not exclusive, there is always a mixture. We could object that the religious attitude is simply different in men and women. However, if it is true that women are more strongly introverted, it could also be true that woman is in general more religious in her attitude.

There is an ancient saying that cultural philosophers repeat: If religion has disappeared from the women of a people, that people is doomed. That is to say, if a people begins to cast off the yoke of religion, it will for a long time still find a hiding place in women. However, if women cast off the yoke of religion, the people will decline rapidly, because no one will be left who is sufficiently religious from within.

This naturally means that from the first we may expect that men who have a more feminine disposition, that is, who, firstly, think not just discursively, but also intuitively, and who, secondly, are more inclined to guide than lead or govern, will also have a more profound and more strongly expressed religious sense. If you keep this context in mind, you will understand that to the extent that we adapt ourselves to woman's nature, we not only do a great service to women, but through women also to men. They have to complement each other.

My aim at the moment is only to open our eyes to our own nature, on the one hand, and on the other, to help you understand that woman has also been given a great value by God.

If we look back on the past centuries, we will notice how strongly even men like St Thomas were bound by the opinion of their times. They simply saw man as the ideal and then measured the ideal of woman against it. The effect had to be that they saw woman as a deviant form of humanity, because she was seen as a deviant form of man.

Listen to this again: God created both man and woman. He not only created man, he also created woman – even though woman was formed from man’s rib. So man has a certain precedence. St Paul proceeded from the same thought when he developed his philosophy of man and woman.

I think I must still emphasize one final thought, which penetrates more deeply into the heart of man and woman. If man gives, he gives something. It is very rare for man to give himself. If a woman gives, she gives herself. That is a tremendous difference.

If you have had an opportunity to get to know noble-minded women, you will understand that it can be a tremendous sacrifice for a woman not to marry. Consider what it means if a woman gives herself to me! Naturally you may not immediately think of the sexual act. That is part of it, but only as an expression of total self-surrender. A woman gives herself. If she gives something, it is always a symbol of herself. She has the urge to give herself, and to give herself completely. Consider how valuable that can be for a man who finds himself in the thick of life – he comes home and there is someone there who gives herself to him completely, who surrenders herself to him completely.

You will naturally say: Where do we find such women? That is a subject on its own. What is important at the moment is to see the disposition. For us the question is: How do we have to educate and form ourselves in this regard? Popular literature characterises the difference – before marriage, for example – as: A young woman tells herself, if she is somehow an ideal woman: I want to see whether I can make him happy. A man is inclined to ask: I want to see whether I can be happy with that young woman. The difference is doubtlessly there.

Vice versa, you will also have to say: If I have a feminine disposition – and how many of you have it more or less strongly! – you will be able to guess that this feminine form of nature is far more strongly inclined to be faithful, to be unshakably faithful. Man draws up a plan. Who carries it out? Woman. Of course, this has all to be understood *cum grano salis*.<sup>12</sup>

When we accepted women into the Movement, a Jesuit remarked, “That’s a tragedy. You will see, women will be the death of the Family.” I don’t think they became its death. Of course, Eve and the diabolical are always part of the picture. But the women have upheld all the ideas faithfully. Not for the sake of the idea, but because of their personal attachment; because they have given themselves completely to a person.

The great mistake naturally consists in seeing everything in this regard in a sexual light. Sexuality is not identical with sexual. Even self-surrender is primarily understood today as sexual union. Of course, sexual union is a symbol of total self-surrender. Especially with woman – in contrast to man – the soul is primary, and that includes every expression of love. With man the danger is far greater that everything quickly becomes sensual, it is drawn downwards, it descends to the sexual.

With what is this connected? Man more quickly separates what is above from what is below. He is strongly intellectual, and then the whole person does not follow. It is a great task of our whole educational work to take hold of the whole person and form him or her, including the heart.

The great mistake, which has for centuries often been found in the Church, in its authorities, is the admonition: Don’t have any contact with this or that!<sup>13</sup> But then you remain one-sided. If man

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<sup>12</sup> With a grain of salt, that is, it is only part of the truth.

<sup>13</sup> Such as with women.

remains as he is, he has no complementation. It is always a big sacrifice to give up this ontological complementation.

For example, let us suppose that you have a good and ideal relationship to your sister. Of course, the opposite is often true, but the tendency is at least there. Now think to yourself what a beautiful thing it is to have before you a person who gives herself completely. Don't think all the time: Aha, that is sexual! Of course, if I imagine the worst, it will also happen. You only need to scrape off a little bit of white paint, then you will see how much evil is behind it! We may not do this. We have to think in the way God thinks, even if I have to say to myself: Well, you will seldom find a woman who corresponds with God's thinking. I know this as well as you do. But I at least know what God thinks about it, and that is also how I think. Consider for a moment how many difficulties are overcome by this approach. They have been shown up to be an illusion.

To put it very succinctly, if you want to educate women – and, of course, also the feminine element in ourselves – you will have to form people who are selfless and freed from self in every respect. If you apply this to women, the result will seem to be the opposite to start with. Since woman is so strongly orientated to life, she will cling to you most terribly at first. However, that is the meaning of education. What do you have to aim at? That selfish love becomes selfless. If you manage one day to bring it about that a woman has given herself to someone she loves – now comes the mystery of love – she will then find herself. This is in keeping with what Jesus himself said, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it".<sup>14</sup> It is such a simple, profound and great truth!

As men you may not tell yourselves that it is a shame to have a feminine disposition. I want to be a man! Yet the feminine element is also part of genuine and complete manhood. If I am married, I look for feminine complementation from my wife. If I am not married, I have to be far more careful to ensure that the feminine element in me is developed. Although we men have to be children of one great idea – that is primary – we must also become children of one great love. The two have to be connected. Man, who takes the idea as his starting point, has to see to it that he also acquires great, personal love. And woman, who takes personal love as her starting point, has to see to it that love is integrated into and subordinated to an idea.

Since a woman is naturally orientated to giving herself to someone, you have to reckon with it that woman's love is jealous for a long time. You may not take this amiss. It is woman's weakness. Jealousy is simply part of her nature. Can you understand why woman's love is connected with jealousy? Because woman is holistic. I want to have the person I love completely to myself. So if someone else also wants that person, I have to share.

If, as a man or educator, you do not know this, you will quickly become unhappy. You will then tell yourself: I had better leave my hands off everything!

Yet woman has to give her heart in some way. That is the tragedy for many women today – they are unable to give their heart to anyone; no one wants to accept it. Or, if her heart is accepted, this acceptance is immediately sexualised. To accept a woman correctly – fatherliness is required – is often far more difficult than to give love. It has to be learnt.

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<sup>14</sup> Mt 10,39; Lk 17,33.

And now let us look at the other side of the coin. “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. ... Male and female he created them”.<sup>15</sup> “It is not good for man to be alone. I will give him a helper who will be like him”.<sup>16</sup> When it says “to be like him”, it applies, first of all, to equality in the structure of their being. It also means that woman is to be man’s helper with a view to completing his nature. So woman has to see to it that her whole being becomes whole, otherwise she cannot help man to complete himself.

Of course, woman has also to be man’s helper as far as activities are concerned. However, what is primary is the completion of being. That is the deepest meaning of marriage. Of course, marriage serves to *procreatio prolis*,<sup>17</sup> as well as to *sedatio concupiscentiae*,<sup>18</sup> but we may not forget the completion of being. *Adiutorium simile sibi*<sup>19</sup> – they are meant to complement each other’s nature.

There are many noble-minded women even today, despite all their weaknesses. So when we are together, it is not a good idea to say, as is so often done: There we have it again. That is so typical of woman! You can say it kindly or humorously, but behind it there must be profound reverence that recognises and acknowledges all that is valuable in woman.

Now, if man is no longer a man, and woman is no longer a woman, we are faced with an ontological revolution, in as far as such a thing is possible. Where could this ontological revolution lead? The danger is great that the two sexes no longer complement each other, because they no longer cultivate and accept their typical originality sufficiently.

Perhaps I should take the nature of man as a starting point, and compare what is happening in America where things have progressed further than elsewhere. By science they understand only experimental science. If someone becomes a doctor of philosophy, if he reaches back to ultimate being, that is, if he thinks metaphysically, it is not considered respectable, it no longer counts as science. If this spreads, man, who is inclined to think discursively, will no longer be able to realize his originality sufficiently. What will be the result? The revenge of the unborn. Since the mind can no longer develop sufficiently, since it is no longer sufficiently acknowledged, a powerful and debasing vitalism will be awakened in man as a result of this lack; his drives will be aroused in the worst sense of the word.

So if I now look more deeply into human culture and society – what is the source of all the revolutions in the world of today?

If I think of a woman, who basically has noble instincts that are bonded to a person, it offers man a balance once again. His descent to the lowest levels is halted by a woman who has developed the whole structure of her being.

As I have already described it, man is by nature inclined to govern and lead. If he lives in a collectivist society, his nature is shaken. The danger is great that he will personally become a mass man, and as a result will lose the ability to lead. If he then rises above the masses, he becomes a dictator. Both are miscarriages.

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<sup>15</sup> Gen 1,26-27.

<sup>16</sup> Gen 2, 18.

<sup>17</sup> To procreate children.

<sup>18</sup> To satisfy concupiscence.

<sup>19</sup> A helper who is like him.

So if man loses his nature to some extent, he can no longer complement woman. They have to complement each other. Man has also to complement woman. Woman has also been shaken in her nature. Her ability to guide, to empathise, becomes self-seeking. So it is a great tragedy if man does not complement woman.

The same can be said of the other side of the picture. The more man loses his nature – he only gives some part of himself – the more selfish he becomes. This is always the case. Unless we strive to bring about an organic balance in our nature, our self-centredness will outweigh everything else that is otherwise noble in our nature.

We are faced with the great calamity of a form of ontological revolution.

The situation we experience today shows us the tremendous danger because the two sexes no longer complement each other, because they no longer accept and possess themselves sufficiently. If woman's intrinsic qualities are lost, man's nature becomes extreme and sickly. The same applies to woman.

I have first described the two sexes by contrasting them, then, secondly, I have emphasised that when the two natures are not distinctive, they can no longer complement each other. They then destroy each other and draw each other increasingly into the abyss.

### **Crises in the lives of man and woman**

Now for a further thought. How do men and women prove their mettle when their lives are in crisis? This is a modern criterion. When crises come, how do I protect what I have already acquired?

In order to answer this question, let us briefly meditate on the life of Jesus and see how women and men behaved when confronted with Jesus' fate.

According to what the Bible tells us, we will have to say that women fare better than men. During Jesus' suffering, when he broke down humanly, the men all failed.

First of all, Pilate. Why did he fail? Because he was too strongly extroverted. He wanted to keep his position, he wanted to be admired by the people; he had a scale of values based on ideas; he was an extrovert.

Let us immediately look at the contrasting image: Who tried to defend Jesus during his suffering? Pilate's wife. Of course, she did not believe in Jesus as God. Her motive for intervening came from her natural instinct, her orientation to life. She was obviously a prophet, someone who had been given a supernatural mission. Who else defended Jesus, even if only through their being? The women under the cross.

Where were the men? The apostles ran away, although they had previously sworn that they would not abandon him. Peter the sabre rattler! Previously he had sworn that he would rather die for Jesus. Later this came true, but it took some time before his nature as a man had matured and he was able to bring its full weight to bear.

Of course, St John was there. We are told that the one who would gladly have read the riot act, only remained under the cross because of his chivalrous attachment to the Mother of Jesus. You can see it whichever way you like.

However, when you reflect on these things, you will have to admit that by nature women cope with life's crises better, and man by nature breaks down more quickly. Why? Because man is too little involved with all his instincts and drives, with his love, with his attachment to people.

Schoenstatt's history is also a glorious chapter for our women. The full weight of public opinion can oppose them. They have asserted themselves. Whoever loves deeply will not be so easily shaken by the mind. On the contrary, everything can cause them to remain all the more loyal.

I would gladly dwell on this point for quite some time until these truths have sunk into your hearts, and so that we can understand better what a tremendous treasure we are giving up when we do not marry. Of course, the question then arises as to how we can make these feminine values our own without allowing a shadow to fall on our celibacy.

### **Other expressions that characterise woman's nature**

I would like to add two expressions with which I have often explained their nature to our Sisters:

1. All soul, all self-surrender, all purity.
2. Silent, strong and divinised handmaid.<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps it is less easy to understand the expression "divinised". It comes from Scheeben. The background is the dogmatic question as to how we are to understand a person in the state of grace. .

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<sup>20</sup> At the Annunciation our Blessed Mother says: I am the handmaid (*Magd*) or servant of the Lord.