

Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos “The Old Catholic Marianists”

Statement Regarding Ministerial Standing of Women

The Order of the Most Holy Mary Theotokos affirms certain doctrines and principles as basic to its existence and, therefore, non-negotiable in its practice. Among these are its commitment to the full Divine inspiration and authority of the Bible; the autonomous polity of our local churches and ministries; and the importance of maintaining unity without denying diversity. Each of these three affirmations has been considered as vital to our position with regard to the ministerial standing of women in our self-governing religious community and independent autocephalous jurisdiction of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

We understand that a significant amount of study has been done on this subject in recent years. It appears evident to us that Christians, equally committed to the authority of Holy Scripture, may disagree on whether or not the Scriptures allow for the ordination of women, particularly into Holy Orders in the Catholic faith tradition. We recognize that defenders on both sides of the issue of women’s ordination do so upon principles which they believe to be based on Biblical authority. The Old Catholic Marianists are among those who truly believe in and trust the historical evidence that the Early Church did in fact ordain women as deacons, priests, and bishops. We respect those who do not accept the ordination of women, and we in no way wish to speak badly of those who disagree with our position. Likewise, it is also our hope that those who do not accept our position do not condemn us or speak harshly or in an un-Christian like manner toward us. We affirm that persons, who are firmly committed to the authority of God’s Word, though they differ in their interpretations of the Word on this subject, are welcome to hold their convictions with clear conscience.

We urge, in this issue as in others, that we all relate to one another in a spirit of love and unity. We will not compromise our own convictions on this, and we respect the right of others, who are also devoted to the Head of the Church and to His Word, to hold their own convictions as well.