

The Jesus Movement: Part VI. The end of the Apostolic Era.

The previous article in the Mutations series explored key aspects of Paul's understanding of the centrality of Christ and how his message quickly precipitated a profound theological rift not only between himself and Pharisaic Judaism but also between him and his fellow Judeo-Christian missionaries. The disputes were largely about the conditions on which Gentiles would be accepted and integrated by the Jesus Movement. Paul steadfastly refused to accept the principle that conversion required not only Baptism but also observance of Jewish dietary law. For Paul, the issue reduced to the absolute and exclusive centrality of Christ and that authentic humanity together with its inalienable freedoms is realisable in him alone.

This essay will cover key developments in the community life, worship, leadership and the redirection of its evangelical outreach as the Jesus Movement was gradually transformed into 'Church' during the century after the Apostles and Evangelists.

With the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 CE, both Judaism and the Judeo-Christians of the Jesus Movement lost a central reference point of identity and worship. After the national and religious catastrophe of the destruction of the National Shrine in Jerusalem, Yohanan ben Zakkai and his Pharisee colleagues regrouped at the coastal town of Yavneh. There they began to teach and promote the spiritual *Temple of the Heart* and, in doing this, helped to insured the ultimate survival of Jewish belief, identity and soul.

When Judaism finally expelled the Jesus Movement from the Synagogue, its followers established their own throughout Palestine but more extensively so though out the Greco-Roman world. Swedish theologian, Krister Stendahl has described the Jesus Movement's orthodox Jewish neighbour as 'the synagogue across the street.' (1) Many Christian communities imaginatively adapted Jewish rituals, observances and customs then combined them with their unique weekly memorial of the Lord's Supper. This order of life and worship remained at the centre of Christian existence for over two hundred years. An increasingly important feature of life in the Jesus Movement in its Diaspora was a deep sense of communion throughout its network of communities.

Hospitality offered to travelling fellow Christians, especially itinerant preachers, was a profoundly important virtue which was embraced, valued and practised in the early Church even though there were abuses by pretenders and opportunists from time to time. The *Didache* (*The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, approximately the last third of 1st Century CE) illustrates the point:

“Therefore, whoever comes and teaches you all these things aforesaid, receive him. If the teacher himself is perverted and teaches a different doctrine to the subversion thereof, do not listen to him; but if he increases your righteousness and knowledge of the Lord, receive him as you would the Lord. And concerning the apostles and prophets, do

according to the command of the Gospel. Let every apostle who comes to you be received as you would the Lord. He will stay one day, and if necessary, a second day, but if he stays three days, he is a false prophet. Let the apostle when departing take nothing except bread until he arrives at his next lodging. But if he asks for money, he is a false prophet.” (2)

From Movement to Church: Emerging Leadership Structures

The evidence available on how the Jesus Movement was structured and functioned at the beginning of the second century CE is quite abundant. The styles of leadership, ritual and community organisation found in the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, John and Acts reflect synagogal structures etc.

From the time of Paul and even earlier, the Jesus Movement had clearly spread across the Empire. This sense of an interconnection of communities known collectively as the *Ekklesia* (Church) began to grow even during the period of the Gospels. In a primitive Eucharistic prayer in the *Didache* there are two references to this keen sense of a far flung Christian Diaspora: the community prays at the Eucharist that “the Church be gathered from the ends of the earth” (9:4); that God will “gather it (the Church) together from the four winds” (10:5). Ignatius of Antioch was the first Christian writer to qualify the ‘church’ with the adjective ‘catholic’: *for where Jesus Christ is there is the catholic church* (*‘e ekklesia katholike*) – *Smyrnaeans* 8: 2.

Ignatius of Antioch (late 1c CE – early 2c CE, a martyr under Hadrian) reflects the life of the Jesus Movement in Antioch as synagogal in structure but this general assembly consisted of the house churches being the basic component (Gk: *oikos ekklesia*, Lat. *domus ecclesia*) The local Christian synagogue was governed by an overseer (*episkopos*) who was supported by an administrative assistant (*diakonos*). The overseer over time and either by passively absorbed or actively appropriated increasing control over the members of the Community. This included concentration of the diverse charismata within the community and the authority into his own person and function and then to regulate their use in the community. This became the basis of later centralised governance by appointed overseers into ‘ordained’ *episkopoi* in the fourth century.

Elaine Pagels, an authority on early Christian literature, writes, 'When the orthodox insisted upon 'one God', they simultaneously validated the system of governance in which the church is ruled by 'one bishop'.... [Clement's] letter marks a dramatic moment in the history of Christianity. For the first time, we find here an argument for dividing the Christian community between 'the clergy' and 'the laity'. The church is to be organized in terms of a strict order of superiors and subordinates... But Ignatius went further than Clement... [He] warns 'the laity' to revere, honour, and obey the bishop 'as if he were God' ”- *Smyrnaeans*, 9.” (3)

Ignatius evidently expected that the basic synagogal structures of the communities he visited on his final journey were recognisably similar to those in place in Antioch. It was from this

community organisational model that the Jesus Movement drew its inspiration for a more complex hierarchical structure of leadership and ministries which developed over time.

The Eucharist in the Second Century

Ignatius indicates that his Christian community in Antioch which had originally commissioned Paul for the Gentile mission was fully aware from the Apostle's reports on abuses of the Eucharist in Corinth. These centred on the social humiliation of the poorer members of the community by the richer ones. Paul's Greek expresses the economic divide in the bluntest of terms, 'the have nots and 'the haves.' The most offensive aspects of this abuse were intensified as they occurred frequently during the memorial of the Lord's Supper which was observed within the *Agape* (the community 'love/fellowship meal). (1 Cor 11: 17-34; see also James 2: 1-5)

Paul, as part of his missionary responsibilities, had informed the Antioch community of the way he had dealt with the abuses. His pastoral actions no doubt influenced the Antioch community to put in place safeguards to lessen the possibility of it happening among them. One such measure was to establish leadership structures which would guarantee effective oversight and good order in the community.

Ignatius who had inherited a highly developed theology did not hesitate in teaching that the person of the *episkopos* should be identified with God the *Father*. It is not surprising then that he made it clear that the bishop, as a *paterfamilias*, was normal celebrant of baptism and the presider at the Eucharist. This model of male hegemony in Ignatius' community is consistent with leadership structures in both synagogue and the Roman Household:

"Wherever the bishop appear, there let the multitude be; even as wherever Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not lawful either to baptize, or to hold a love-feast without the consent of the bishop; but whatsoever he shall approve of, that also is well pleasing unto God, to the end that whatever is done may be safe and sure." *Smyrnaeans*, 8:2 (4)

Of considerable significance in Ignatius' directions is that there is no reference to the Eucharist presider as a *sacrificial priest*. In fact the earliest reference to the bishop (*Overseers*) as priest occurs late in the second century and it is predicated of presbyters (*Elders*) even later. Augustine (354-430 CE), in all his writings about Church never refers to bishops or presbyters as *priests*. (5)

Another important second century Christian source about the Eucharistic liturgy is Justin Martyr (100-165 CE). He described in some detail the order of the Eucharistic celebration in his community:

"On the day called Sunday there is a gathering together in the same place of all who live in a given city or rural district. The memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits. Then when the reader ceases, the president in a discourse admonishes and urges the imitation of these good things. Next we all rise together and send up prayers.

When we cease from our prayer, bread is presented and wine and water. The president in the same manner sends up prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people sing out their assent, saying the 'Amen.' A distribution and participation of the elements for which thanks have been given is made to each person, and to those who are not present they are sent by the deacons.

Those who have means and are willing, each according to his own choice, gives what he wills, and what is collected is deposited with the president. He provides for the orphans and widows, those who are in need on account of sickness or some other cause, those who are in bonds, strangers who are sojourning, and in a word he becomes the protector of all who are in need.”

Justin adds further invaluable insights into the early Christian understanding of the Eucharistic mystery:

"And this food is called among us Εὐχαριστία [the Eucharist] ... For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh." (6)

During the century following Justin, the theology of both Eucharist and worshipping Community was further enriched and the actual ritual became extensively diversified in various regions as Christianity began to find a home in its host cultures. While in the Western part of the empire, eucharistic worship increasingly absorbed Latin precisions, conventions and rationality. In the East, from the outset up to the present day, the Eucharistic celebration has preserved its emblematic air of indefinability and mystery. The action of the Holy Spirit has always been stressed in the Eastern liturgy while in the Western Church the major focus of attention from around the fourth century has been the person of the priest-celebrant, precise wording and strictly prescribed rubrics.

Early struggles with Gnosticism and Docetism:

The full truth about Jesus Christ was not completely revealed at the first Christian Pentecost. The work of exploring mystery has been a constant one. However the first five hundred years witnessed a series of Councils, local and ecumenical Synods which painstakingly defined the core elements of the Christian Creed. The essential discernment and theological ground work for these formal gatherings took place in the first fifty years or so of that Pentecost. A major enterprise for Christians was to search for an ever clearer understanding of who Jesus really was, his relationship with the one he called *Abba* Father and God's Spirit which drove him out into the wilderness to face himself, own his identity and to assist him to embrace the Father's call. A key challenge for the members of the Jesus Movement was to accept the humanity of Christ completely and to explore the consequence of that reality. Many were more comfortable with Christ as some kind of 'divine man' than with one who did not play the pretence game either with himself or with those around him.

American theologian Brendan Hill provides a short but valuable summary of the Christological thinking in first century Jesus Movement: "For Irenaeus, the Son was not quite

equal to the Father. For Tertullian, the Father and the Son are of the same substance, but not equal. And for Origen, the Logos is indeed an image of God, but is clearly not God.” (7) All this theological struggle finally bore fruit in the Councils of Nicaea in 325 CE and Constantinople in 380 CE. The Creed which was proclaimed at those synods encapsulated first official definitions of the Trinity and the dual natures of Christ.

As early as the 70s CE there is evidence that in the community of Mark there was an internal conflict between those who accepted the humanity of Jesus, the figure of rejection, persecution, suffering and death and those who believe him to be impervious to all these. An example of this denial of Christ’s human vulnerability and mortality is reflected in the post crucifixion narrative when a request is made for the body (*soma*) of Jesus. The request is granted and the centurion hands over to the disciples the corpse (*ptoma*) of Jesus (Mk 15: 43-45). There is nothing ambiguous about a corpse. This deviant doctrine is known as *Docetism*, from the Greek verb *dokein*: “to seem.” Hence, Jesus only *seemed* to suffer physically, emotionally and psychologically, experience real pain and to die.

Clement of Alexandria (150-215 CE) provides a stunning example of this mono-dimensional doctrine when he wrote out of his own, at least subconscious, ambivalence about the human nature of Christ:

“For he ate, not for the sake of the body, which was kept together by a holy energy, but in order that it might not enter into the mind of those who were with him to entertain a different opinion of him. But he was entire impassible (incapable of suffering), inaccessible to any movement of feeling, either pleasure or pain.”

Hilary of Poitiers (310-367), known as ‘the Hammer of the heretics’ and proclaimed Doctor of the Church, echoed a similar brand of flawed Christology to that of Clement of Alexandria over a century before:

“Our Lord felt the force of suffering but without its pain; the nails pierced the flesh as an object passes through the air, painlessly.” (8)

Docetism was an early manifestation of *Gnosticism* which evolved out of negative place materiality occupied in platonic philosophy. It has had a profound negative influence on Christian thinking over the centuries placing spirit and matter in dialectical opposition. A strain of neo-Platonic thinking was a significant ingredient in the Augustinian theory of ‘Original Sin.’ It was and is simply a theory but it has been promoted to the mainstream in much of Christian theology of human nature, sin and redemption. It is still alive and flourishing in Catholicism and is particularly evident in the Magisterium’s often deviant obsession with sex and a latent contempt for women which continues to simmer away in certain Church teachings and practice. This attitude has its Western documented origins in Aristotle and others, earlier and later, who taught that females were conceived on days when their father’s semen was degraded by adverse atmospheric conditions, notably the debilitating east or south wind, known today by various names especially around the Mediterranean: *Sharav* (Hebrew), *Khamsin* (Arabic), *Scirocco* (Italian), *der Foehn* (German). Thomas Aquinas echoed the same offensive naïveté:

"A female is deficient and unintentionally caused. For the active power of the semen always seeks to produce a thing completely like itself, something male. So if a female is produced, this must be because the semen is weak or because the material [provided by the mother] is unsuitable, or because of the action of some external factor such as the winds from the south which make the atmosphere humid"

Having described women as deficient males, Aquinas proceeded to explain why they are, according to the philosophical tradition, intellectually backward as well:

"But man is yet further ordered to a still nobler vital action, and that is intellectual operation. Therefore there was greater reason for the distinction of these two forces in man; so that the female should be produced separately from the male; although they are carnally united for generation. Therefore directly after the formation of woman, it was said: "And they shall be two in one flesh" (Gn. 2:24). *Summa Theologica I, qu. 92, art. 1* (9)

Pope Francis unfortunately continues unwittingly to run the risk of attempting to promote an idealised view of women which is modelled on a distorted biblical theology of Mary. This theology serves to acknowledge and promote women but it actually removes them from the real human world and the orbit of normality. It may too serve as one of the great rationalisations that the clerical subculture resorts to in order to deal with its terror of women. Instead of genuinely honouring women, random, patronising throwaway lines from Church leaders serve to diminish women's authority by domesticating and trivialising them (10)

The early Patristic Era: Faith seeking understanding

An enormously significant aspect of life in the second century Judeo-Christian communities was their deepening appreciation of and reflection on the continuity between the life, message, death and resurrection of Jesus and their Hebrew Scriptures. Back in the final twenty years of the century before, the community of Matthew had provided an outstanding example of building up a clearer and deeper sense of ecclesial identity and purpose in the light of Jesus and his mission

Second century apologists of Christianity, the early 'Fathers', devoted a great deal to time dialoguing with Jews and Pagans, reasoning with the latter by attempting to show that Christianity was the natural heir to the best of classical culture and the wisdom of the great philosophers of ancient Greece. In their dialogues with Jewish scholars, they imaginatively used references to Old Testament passages to demonstrate Christ and his message were foreshadowed in the ancient historical and prophetic narratives.

One of the most famous exponents of this was Iranaeus (mid 1c CE – 202 CE). Iranaeus, (also known as *Iranaeus of Lyons*), certainly was well acquainted with the writings of the apostolic era. He evidently knew at least some of Paul's letters and he was clearly familiar with all four Gospels (10)

Like Matthew the Evangelist, Iranaeus was passionately committed to conversation and joint scriptural exploration with Jewish scholars. He learned Hebrew so that he could engage with Jews on the common ground of their Scriptures. An important means he used was the product

of his own genius, the *Hexapla* or six columned *synopsis* of the same or parallel texts from different documentary sources. The *Hexapla* was enormously significant in advancing the science of text, literary criticism and exegesis as well as being an extraordinarily useful means of facilitating scholarly dialogue between Christians and Jews.

From the late first century and into the second, Christian theology gradually evolved from what is called a “low Christology” to a higher level of complexity. For example, Ignatius of Antioch at the turn of the first century had a sophisticated high theology of Christ the divine quality of Christ referring to him as “our God” or “Christ God” (*Smyrnaeans* 10:1)

It was through the gradual need of the Christians of the first century and a half to work away stripping flawed opinions and distortions from the core truths of their faith embedded in the Apostolic Tradition that the way was paved for the great doctrinal Councils of the first five centuries. Among the Apologists and theologians who did this important ground work were Ignatius himself, Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, Polycarp of Smyrna, Irenaeus of Lyons, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Tertullian. (11)

The age of persecution: “You can kill us—but you cannot harm us.” - Justin Martyr (Witness to the Faith, A.D. 160)

Up until Nero’s persecution in 64 CE, Christians would have been regarded as just another Jewish sect and as such, enjoyed Roman protection and exemptions guaranteed under Claudius until even he lost patience with them. Roman historian Suetonius (70-130 CE) wrote: “*Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantis Roma expulsi*” (“Since the Jews made constant disturbance at the instigation of Chrestus, Rome expelled them” or “he (Claudius) expelled them from Rome.”) (12)

In Acts 18: 1-2, Luke wrote that two of Paul’s closest co-workers in the Gospel were caught up in that expulsion: “After this he (Paul) left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, lately come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius has commanded all the Jews to leave Rome.” Claudius had previously written the Letter to the citizens of Alexandria reaffirming Roman protection of Jews and their exemptions from certain laws, practices and obligations such as military service which clashed with their laws of separation and their strict monotheism. These concessions dated back to Augustus in 3 BCE.

Nero’s persecution of the Christians in Rome in 64 CE was a relatively short one but it marked a clear end to any kind of protection the Christian sect of Judaism may have previously enjoyed. After that, State punishment of Christians was sporadic and happened as the result of informers rather than a systematic plan. A common charge brought against them was that they were *impious*, hatred of the gods. This charge came under laws against atheism of contempt for the national gods. Justin the Apologist and martyr answered these charges by pleading guilty but ironically and then used it as an evangelical opportunity:

“(Hence) are we called atheists. And we confess that we are atheists, so far as gods of this sort are concerned, but not with respect to the most true God, the Father of righteousness and temperance and the other virtues, who is free from all impurity. But both Him, and the Son (who came forth from Him and taught us these things, and the host of the other good angels who follow and are made like to Him), and the prophetic Spirit, we worship and adore, knowing them in reason and truth, and declaring without grudging to everyone who wishes to learn, as we have been taught.” (13)

Roman persecutions: Nero 54-68 (Peter and Paul martyred around 64); Domitian 89-96; Trajan 109-111; Hadrian 117-138; Marcus Aurelius 161-180

Ignatius of Antioch suffered a martyr’s death under Trajan. In his letter to the Christian community in Rome, Ignatius wrote:

“I am corresponding with all the churches and bidding them all realize that I am voluntarily dying for God — if, that is, you do not interfere. I plead with you, do not do me an unseasonable kindness. Let me be fodder for wild beasts — that is how I can get to God. I am God’s wheat and I am being ground by the teeth of wild beasts to make a pure loaf for Christ. I would rather that you fawn on the beasts so that they may be my tomb and no scrap of my body be left. Thus, when I have fallen asleep, I shall be a burden to no one. Then I shall be a real disciple of Jesus Christ when the world sees my body no more. Pray Christ for me that by these means I may become God’s sacrifice. I do not give you orders like Peter and Paul. They were apostles: I am a convict. They were at liberty: I am still a slave. But if I suffer, I shall be emancipated by Jesus Christ; and united to him, I shall rise to freedom. Even now as a prisoner, I am learning to forgo my own wishes.” (14)

And Justin Martyr who was put to death around 160 CE challenged the rationality and justice of the violence soon to be inflicted on him:

“Reason dictates that persons who are truly noble and who love wisdom will honour and love only what is true. They will refuse to follow traditional viewpoints if those viewpoints are worthless...Instead, a person who genuinely loves truth must choose to do and speak what is true, even if he is threatened with death...I have not come to flatter you by this written petition, nor to impress you by my words. I have come to simply beg that you do not pass judgment until you have made an accurate and thorough investigation. Your investigation must be free of prejudice, hearsay, and any desire to please the superstitious crowds. As for us, we are convinced that you can inflict no lasting evil on us. We can only do it to ourselves by proving to be wicked people. You can kill us—but you cannot harm us.” (15)

Persecutions were, for the most part, administered by provincial governors rather than Emperors. A classic example is documented in the letters of Pliny the Younger, Governor of Bithynia, to Trajan (111-113 CE). In one such letter Pliny asks Trajan for advice on what to do with Christians who had been denounced to him. He provides the Emperor with some background on the sect:

“Soon accusations spread, as usually happens, because of the proceedings going on, and several incidents occurred. An anonymous document was published containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they were or had been Christians, when they

invoked the gods in words dictated by me, offered prayer with incense and wine to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for this purpose together with statues of the gods, and moreover cursed Christ--none of which those who are really Christians, it is said, can be forced to do--these I thought should be discharged. Others named by the informer declared that they were Christians, but then denied it, asserting that they had been but had ceased to be, some three years before, others many years, some as much as twenty-five years. They all worshipped your image and the statues of the gods, and cursed Christ.

They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food--but ordinary and innocent food. Even this, they affirmed, they had ceased to do after my edict by which, in accordance with your instructions, I had forbidden political associations. Accordingly, I judged it all the more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition."

Trajan's reply to the questions of Pliny the Younger:

"You observed proper procedure, my dear Pliny, in sifting the cases of those who had been denounced to you as Christians. For it is not possible to lay down any general rule to serve as a kind of fixed standard. They are not to be sought out; if they are denounced and proved guilty, they are to be punished, with this reservation, that whoever denies that he is a Christian and really proves it--that is, by worshiping our gods--even though he was under suspicion in the past, shall obtain pardon through repentance. But anonymously posted accusations ought to have no place in any prosecution. For this is both a dangerous kind of precedent and out of keeping with the spirit of our age." (16)

Some concluding thoughts

During the century and a half after the Passover of Jesus Christ and the transformative event of the first Christian Pentecost, the Jesus Movement set out on a course of self-discovery as it underwent a fundamental transformation from an exclusive socio-religious environment to inclusiveness and absorption of outsiders and their peculiar outlooks and customs. At considerable cost, the Movement successfully arrived at its own maturity, self-confidence and independence after the painful experience of separation anxiety and alienation from the ancestral home of Judaism. As the split between them both became definitive and an ongoing and substantial presence in Palestine became unviable, the Judeo-Christian community struck out into the Gentile world as commanded by Christ in his final instructions to the Eleven: "Go (therefore) and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and, I am with you always (*Immanuel*, Mt 1: 23) to the close of the age" (Mt 28: 19-20).

It was in this new Gentile environment that they gradually came to understand more profoundly the mystery of the Incarnation, of God with them and God with their fellow human beings, a God who, through the Incarnation, had invested the mystery of divine grace

in humanity. It was this common humanity which provided the living context in which the members of the Jesus Movement acquired a new sense of self and of relationship with outsiders. In this environment, Christians quickly learnt the necessary concepts, language and cultural perspectives to communicate persuasively the Gospel of Christ to peoples of the Greco-Roman world.

Endnotes

- 1) *The School of Matthew*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, (1968) xi.
 - 2) *The Didache*, 11:1 (Linked [HERE](#))
 - 3) *The Gnostic Gospels 'One God, One Bishop': The Politics of Monotheism*, (Vintage Books, 1981) ' 33-56. (Edwin Hatch on Church organisation [here](#))
- For contemporary social context of abuses of table hospitality in the Roman world see, Pliny, *Epistles* 2.6; 1.15 and also Gaius Petronius Arbiter, *Dinner with Trimalchio* which describes the Roman custom of grading the quality of food offered at a banquet according to the social status of the guests.
- 4) The Letter to the *Smyrnaeans* (Linked [HERE](#)).
 - 5) *Holy Orders and Sacrificial Priesthood*, Called to Communion online, May, 2010. (Linked [HERE](#)) The late US biblical expert Raymond Brown, wrote decades ago: “How one got the right to preside and whether it endured beyond a single instance we do not know; but a more plausible substitute for the chain theory is the thesis that sacramental ‘powers’ were part of the mission of the Church and that there were diverse ways in which the Church (or the communities) designated individuals to exercise those powers – the essential element being Christ-community consent..” *Priest and Bishop. Biblical Reflections* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1970), 41
 - 6) *The First Apology*, 67; *Ibid*, 66 (The full text of *The First Apology* is linked [HERE](#))
 - 7) *Jesus the Christ: Contemporary Perspectives* (Mystic CT: Twenty-third Publications), 218f.
 - 8) *Clement of Alexandria*, *Stomata* 3.VI. 9; VII, Early Christian Writings online (Linked [HERE](#)) For the citations of both Clement and Hilary see Elizabeth Johnson, *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 8.
 - 9) See also Tony Flannery:

“A great tragedy for the Church is that fact that as a result of the superexaltation of Mary, (particularly her virginity) the radical example of Jesus’ behaviour towards women has largely been lost. His rejection of the culture and practice of his time in relation to women, his treatment of them as equals, are some of the most outstanding characteristics of his life and teaching. But the unhealthy combination of Greek and Jewish philosophy with the personal obsessions of Augustine served to bury this crucial part of the Gospel message. The current teachings in relation both to the sexuality and the place of women in the Church are the legacy of centuries of misogyny.” *A Question of Conscience* (Dublin, Londubh Press, 2013) 115.

Jerome’s translation of Gen 2: 23 further illustrates the underlying hermeneutic of contempt of females as derivative and inferior to males:

Dixitque Adam hoc nunc os ex ossibus meis et caro de carne mea haec vocabitur virago quoniam de viro sumpta est.
"And Adam said: This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman (Latin: *virago*), because she was taken out of man."

- 10) Ann Schneible and Mary Rezac, “Women protect humanity against evil, Pope Francis says,” *Catholic News Agency*, September 16, 2015. (Linked [HERE](#))
- 11) Craig M. Lyons, “Were the Gospels written early? ... The testimony of Iranaeus of Lyons,” *Bet Emet Ministries online* (Linked [HERE](#))
- 12) *The Apologists*, Early Church History – CH 101 online (Linked [HERE](#))
- 13) *Claudius*, 25.
- 14) *The First Apology*, 6.
- 15) *To the Romans*, 4.
- 16) *The First Apology*, 2.
- 17) *Letters 10.96-97* (Linked [HERE](#)) and *Persecution in the Early Church*, Religion Facts (Linked [HERE](#))

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September 2015.