

Paul and Women, in a Nutshell

By Marg Mowczko

(Fr Jock writes: 'St Paul is sometimes viewed as a misogynist and as someone partially responsible for the poor Christian/Catholic track record with regard to the role of women. Yet, as the article below reveals, of all the male followers of Jesus mentioned in the New Testament, Paul seems to be the one who worked more closely with women than anyone else, and in whose communities women were most prominent in leadership. Do look up some of the scriptural references below...')



Paul valued the ministry of women and even compared his own apostolic ministry to that of a breastfeeding woman.

At least eighteen women are mentioned in the Pauline letters; sixteen are identified by name. Some of these women, Paul mentions along with a male relative, others are mentioned independently of men.

Here is a list, in alphabetical order, of the eighteen women in Paul's letters, plus Lydia.

Apphia (Phm. 1:2),	Nympha (Col. 4:15),
Chloe (1 Cor. 1:11),	Persis (Rom. 16:12),
Claudia (2 Tim. 4:21),	Phoebe (Rom. 16:1-2 NIV),
Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5);	Priscilla (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim.
Euodia (Php. 4:2-3),	4:19 cf Acts 18:1-3, 18-19, 26),
Julia (Rom. 16:15),	Rufus' mother (Rom. 16:13),
Junia (Rom. 16:7 NIV),	Syntyche (Phil. 4:2-3),
Lois (2 Tim. 1:5),	Tryphena (Rom. 16:12),
Mary (Rom. 16:6),	Tryphosa (Rom. 16:12).
Nereus' sister (Rom. 16:15),	Lydia is mentioned in Acts 16:13-15, 40.

I believe that if these verses were the starting point and focus in discussions on women in ministry, more so than 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:12, the church and the world would be in a much better state.

Paul valued Priscilla, Euodia and Syntyche as his co-workers in gospel ministry. Paul and Priscilla were close friends, having worked together for a few years.

Paul refers to Junia as his relative (or fellow Jew), his fellow prisoner, and as outstanding among the apostles.

He commends Phoebe to the church at Rome as our sister, as a patroness of many, and as minister or deacon of the church at Cenchrea. He also entrusted his letter to the Romans to Phoebe as his envoy to take to Rome.

He acknowledges positively the ministry labours of Mary of Rome, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis.

He loved Persis.

He warmly mentions no less than ten women in Romans chapter 16. Paul had met some of these women when his and their journeys had intersected. Other women in Romans 16, such as Julia, hosted house churches in Rome. (Olympa(s), in Romans 16:5, may or may not be a woman's name. If she is a woman, that makes eleven women in Romans 16.)

He took seriously a report from Chloe of Corinth's people.

He passed on greetings from Claudia of Rome, and sent greetings to Apphia of Colossae.

He recognised the house church of Nympha in Laodicea, and asked that his greetings be passed on to her and her church.

He accepted the hospitality of Lydia in Philippi and held meetings of the fledgling Philippian congregation in her home.

He respected the faith of Lois and Eunice.

<http://margmowczko.com/paul-and-women-in-a-nutshell/>