

International Human Rights and Gender Justice in Church and Society

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When Jesus wanted to express the need for continuous and insistent prayer, he used the example of a widow (Luke 18). It is one of the most unequal encounters Jesus mentions: a strict and powerful judge and a—most likely—poor widow who is claiming her rights against an opponent.

A woman has to strive for her rights, has to use legal institutions to gain justice, to get a just decision against someone who is not treating her justly and equally. This widow had to insist, had to use her female power. The judge decided in her favour not because her case was clear—no judgment is even mentioned that we can understand. He decides on the basis of silencing her, of having no tension and no stress anymore due to her persistent claims.

Reading this biblical text in connection with the debates on human rights offers an ancient example of the fact that it is not self-explanatory that legal systems have addressed issues beyond the recognition of who is asking and, more precisely, if it is men or women who are requesting something.

In this chapter,¹ I want to indicate on the basis of practical experience, and without any claim of generalization, four issues reflecting the debate on human rights and gender:

- the missing synchronization of the fight for human rights and women's rights
- UN Resolution 1325 as a milestone in the recognition of the role

1. The following text is from the perspective of activities in the field of gender justice, especially within the ecumenical networks of the Westphalian Church, UEM, and the work in Southern Africa and Asia. The chapter has no intention of offering an overview of or scientific research on the long debate of how far human rights have covered or included women's rights from the beginning.—see Christa Wichterich, “Human Rights and Feminist Critique,” 9 March 2021, <https://rosalux-geneva.org/christa-wichterich>—but wants to add some current observations facing the situation worldwide: that after more than 60 years of the Declaration of Human Rights, equal rights for women and for LGBTIQ+ persons are still not self-evident, but often have to be claimed, like the widow did in front of the judge.

of women in the fight for peace and justice as a basis of feminist foreign policies

- a gender perspective adding recognition to the practical work of women
- the still unfinished agenda of gender justice in churches

The Missing Synchronization of the Fight for Human Rights and Women's Rights

Only lately have human rights been diversified and women's rights discussed specifically.

When the feminist movement started in the 1960s and 1970s in society and its issues were taken up at the level of the United Nations, civil society organizations were the leading players pressing for this perspective. Churches, however, were late to raise these issues and focus on equal rights and equal representation.

For women (as well as for men who were born in the 1960s or even the 1970s), the Fourth World Conference on Women² in Beijing in 1995 marked a significant turning point for the global agenda for gender equality in the political field as well as in society at large:

The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action,³ adopted unanimously by 189 countries, is an agenda for women's empowerment and considered the key global policy document on gender equality. It sets strategic objectives and actions for the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality in 12 critical areas of concern:

- women and poverty
- education and training of women
- women and health
- violence against women
- women and armed conflict

2. UN Women, "Fourth World Conference on Women," Beijing, 1995, <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/fwcwn.html>.

3. United Nations, "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" (1995), https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/PFA_E_Final_WEB.pdf.

- women and the economy
- women in power and decision-making
- institutional mechanism for the advancement of women
- human rights of women
- women and the media
- women and the environment
- the girl-child⁴

Indeed, the Beijing conference was a milestone for understanding the impact of women in society. The discussion around gender was not yet in focus during those times, but the declaration marked the relevant areas where women have been neglected, where women can add a lot, and where more focus should be directed.

An interesting fact is that one topic was entitled “Human rights of women”—indicating that women’s rights need a special focus; the inclusion of women was analyzed and seen as a missing factor.

The declaration addresses this issue as follows:

We reaffirm our commitment to:

- The equal rights and inherent human dignity of women and men and other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Right to Development;
- Ensure the full implementation of the human rights of women and of the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

4. UN Women, “World Conferences on Women,” <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/world-conferences-on-women>.

We are convinced that:

- Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace;
- Women's rights are human rights;
- Equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women, and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well-being and that of their families as well as to the consolidation of democracy;
- Eradication of poverty based on sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice requires the involvement of women in economic and social development, equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centred sustainable development;
- The explicit recognition and reaffirmation of the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment;

We are determined to:

- . . .;
- Ensure the full enjoyment by women and the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and take effective action against violations of these rights and freedoms;
- Take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child and remove all obstacles to gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women;
- Encourage men to participate fully in all actions towards equality;
- Promote women's economic independence, including employment, and eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women by addressing the structural

causes of poverty through changes uneconomic, ensuring equal access for all women, including those in rural areas, as vital development agents, to productive resources, opportunities and public services; . . .

- Prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls;
- Ensure equal access to and equal treatment of women and men in education and health care and enhance women's sexual and reproductive health as well as education;
- Promote and protect all human rights of women and girls; . . .
- Ensure respect for international law, including humanitarian law, in order to protect women and girls in particular;
- Develop the fullest potential of girls and women of all ages, ensure their full and equal participation in building a better world for all and enhance their role in the development process.
- Ensure women's equal access to economic resources, including land, credit, science and technology, vocational training, information, communication and markets, as a means to further the advancement and empowerment of women and girls, including through the enhancement of their capacities to enjoy the benefits of equal access to these resources, inter alia, by means of international cooperation. . . .⁵

With the declaration of the Beijing conference, the agenda was set, the basis was in place, and the feminist movement took it up in various areas of society. For many, the conference was a pushing factor for feminist initiatives: some were formed long before others came into being as a concrete follow-up. It initiated a broader discussion about gender and an analysis of gender relations in the political area, in academia (including theology), as well as in society as such, and consequently also in discussions on human dignity and human rights. It helped even to translate the call of the human rights debate into practical activities shaping the life of women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ persons.

5. UN Women, "World Conferences on Women," <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/intergovernmental-support/world-conferences-on-women>.

UN Resolution 1325 as a Milestone in the Recognition of the Role of Women in the Fight for Peace and Justice as a Basis of Feminist Foreign Policies

This is one practical follow-up of the debates and the Beijing conference as well as on UN peacekeeping initiatives.

It took about another five years for the role and importance of women in peacekeeping processes to be acknowledged. The affirmation of full humanity called for a holistic approach to the challenges of the world. With the acceptance of the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security No. 1325 in 2000 a huge step was made.⁶ Interestingly for the Christian world, the decision of the UN happened on Reformation Day 2000. Maybe this was just a coincidence, but maybe it can be seen as a wonderful sign for another starting process of change toward a more equal world with human rights and dignity of all for the sake of all.

The UN Special Advisor on Gender said in those days, under the heading “Landmark resolution on Women, Peace and Security”:

The Security Council adopted resolution (S/RES/1325) on women and peace and security on 31 October 2000. The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Resolution 1325 urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts. It also calls on all parties to conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict. The resolution provides a number of important operational mandates, with implications for Member States and the entities of the United Nations system.”⁷

6. UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security No. 1325, <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>

7. OSAGI, “Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security,” <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps>.

The resolution was taken in the aftermath of the experiences in Bosnia and Rwanda, where the question was raised of prevention of violence, protection from violence, and care afterward. The tragic severity of violence against women as a war tactic was clearly visible; it became more and more a topic on the agenda, even of the UN, and called for a gendered approach to all peacekeeping processes.

In short, one can say: No women, no peace!

Regarding peace negotiations in conflicts today, one has to ask: How many women do we see? Who is sitting around the table? Whose voices are heard by the other side? Is sexual violence as a means of war seen and reported? Can victims talk? Can women talk?

In recent times, questions have been raised, and the request for a feminist approach to foreign policies has become louder. Examples from Canada and Sweden have been analyzed and now have also entered the German foreign ministry. Minister Annalena Baerbock is understanding her foreign politics as feminist foreign politics, as seen in this comment on Twitter:

Nach kanadischem & schwedischem Vorbild wird Außenministerin Annalena @ABaerbock eine feministische #Außenpolitik verfolgen. “Wenn die Hälfte der Bevölkerung nicht gleichberechtigt beteiligt, repräsentiert oder bezahlt ist, sind #Demokratien nicht vollkommen.” @auswaertigesamt⁸

Participation is much more than counting numbers and looking only for equal numeric representation: it has a huge impact on the content of the politics, analyses, and strategies to follow and the way to talk.

Christine Lagarde emphasizes the special contribution of female leadership:

Women tend to have a more inclusive leadership style than their male counterparts. A recent study showed that female leaders were more effective during the pandemic, performed better under pressure, and were rated more positively on most of the competences involving interpersonal skills. It is exactly those skills that are needed to rebuild our economies in a more equitable and inclusive way.⁹

8. Twitter, @phoenix_de, 12 January 2022, <https://www.trendsmat.com/twitter/tweet/1481316904010723329>. Translation: “If half the population is not equally involved, represented or paid, #democracies are not perfect.”

9. “Women Tend to Do a Better Job”: Christine Lagarde Praises Female Leaders for Role in Pandemic,” Independent, 23 July 2020, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/christine-lagarde-women-leaders-pandemic-praise-a9634531.html>.

Many years ago, Lagarde said the following, based on her experience in the business world, but one can apply it to the competencies of women in the political arena as well:

The irony is that when women lead, they tend to do as good a job, if not a better job. One study shows that Fortune 500 companies with track records of raising women to senior positions are far more profitable than the average firms in their fields. Women also are less likely to engage in the reckless risk-taking behaviour that sparked the global financial crisis in 2008. They are more likely to make decisions based on consensus-building, inclusion, compassion and with a focus on long-term sustainability.¹⁰

Maybe it is still too early to analyze the impact on feminist foreign politics, especially in this time where war situations are increasing in the world. But at least the relevance of feminist foreign policies has been recognized, and gender becomes an important aspect during elections, in recruiting, and so on. The diversity of the world and its positive aspects are more and more often considered.

A Gender Perspective Adding Recognition of the Practical Work of Women

Often, checklists and questions can help to organize a gender analysis of current activities. It looks simple but might help to identify real underlying issues and indicate a direction to search for an alternative approach:

Here are a few questions one might consider in a gender analysis:

- Do we ask the right questions—do we have equal participation?
- Do we reflect gender issues in all human rights issues without any great reminder?
- Gender is more than women's participation—but this is of course still valid with any issue—therefore are we inclusive toward
 - LGBTIQ+ persons
 - diversification (including people of all skin colours, people with challenges and different academic and non-academic standards)?

10. Christine Lagarde, "The Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20," 31 August 2014. UN Women website, <https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2014/8/oped-christine-lagarde>.

- Gender and finances: Who gets the money? Whose projects and ideas are more stable, better financed? Is gender budgeting an essential point before any financial decision is taken, and is it included in the financial statements?
- Are we sensitive to the shrinking spaces worldwide? Often granted rights are cut. What is the impact when systems are turning toward a stricter fundamentalist perspective? Who are the first who feel this? Is any gender analysis done to consider the impact of the implied changes? How much are traditional rituals and religious customs mentioned and their consequences discussed in a culturally sensitive manner?¹¹
- Are there still spheres in life where straight men predominantly rule the scene? What are the narratives that foster prejudices? For example, in the finance sector, women are rarely the heads of stock indexes. Where do programs exist that address these issues in a sensitive manner?
- Gender-based violence is widely discussed. Certain cases are prominently mentioned, and the media is pouring attention on it, while the huge impact worldwide of gender-based violence often exceeds what has been recognized. Do we recognize that 1 out of 10 children experiences sexual violence—most of them girls?¹² Are policies in place for reporting, follow-up, care of victims, and persecution of perpetrators, and do these fit the various situations so that in the longer run, the number of cases decreases?
- Is there gender sensitivity to the question of whose stories are told? Who are the dominant figures in the public sphere? And who gets the prizes and the public recognition?

As an example, I want to share two stories—thousands could be added—to explain more clearly the last point mentioned regarding narratives and recognition.

11. Examples for restrictive cultural values are girls having no access to education in Afghanistan or women in East Africa who still face genital mutilation.

12. According to data by the World Health Organization, one-third of women globally experience violence at least once in their lifetime. United Nations, “Gender-based Violence Against Women and Girls” (n.d.), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/women/gender-based-violence-against-women-and-girls>.

Whose stories?

For the past few years, the condemnation of the oppression of the Muslim Uyghur minority in China has been in the media. Research by journalists has underlined the injustice, the camps, the violence.¹³ But when we look with a gender perspective and get to know what happens to women in Xinjiang, the story becomes more complete: women are subjected to rape and forced sterilization in the so-called re-education camps where hundreds of thousands of people are detained solely because of their religious affiliation. The exact numbers are as yet unknown.¹⁴ In the current discussion, the special situation of women is partly analyzed, and the severe consequences of the genocide structures that are causing people to be detained without any clear evidence and the forced sterilization or the forced insertion of IUDs is mentioned.¹⁵ It is difficult to estimate the consequences for Uyghur women.

Who gets the recognition and the prizes?

The Gunnar Werner Institute¹⁶ has published a dossier entitled “No Women – No Peace: 20th Anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security,”¹⁷ focusing on the role of women in war conflicts and peacekeeping efforts.

One woman portrayed in that dossier is Munyole Sikudjuwa Honorine.¹⁸ She is one of the few women to have held the rank of colonel in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Munyole Sikudjuwa Honorine has dedicated her life to fighting sexual violence. Currently posted to Bunia in Ituri province, the life of this policewoman has always been punctuated by journeys into conflict zones.

13. See “Who Are the Uyghurs and Why Is China Being Accused of Genocide?” 24 May 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-22278037>.

14. See Matthew Hill, David Campanale and Joel Gunter, “‘Their Goal Is to Destroy Everyone’: Uighur Camp Detainees Allege Systematic Rape,” 2 February 2021, BBC News website, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55794071>.

15. “China Forcing Birth Control on Uighurs to Suppress Population, Report Says,” 29 June 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-53220713>.

16. See “Reframing Reproduction” (n.d.), Gunda Werner Institut website, <https://www.gwi-boell.de>

17. See “No Women – No Peace” (n.d.), Gunda Werner Institut website, <https://www.boell.de/de/no-women-no-peace>.

18. Wendy Bashi, “Occupation? Colonel!” 20 October 2020, <https://www.boell.de/en/2020/10/20/occupation-colonel>.

She says:

‘I began my career in the police in Bukavu, the capital of South Kivu, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. I started out as a police captain for child protection and combatting gender-based violence. I was able to reduce the levels of sexual violence simply by prosecuting suspected rapists.’

. . . Around this time, at the end of the 1990s and early 2000s, the region was plagued by armed conflict and the number of women and young girls being raped rose constantly from week to week. Women’s bodies were transformed into battlefields between different armed groups; vaginas were cruelly cut and torn by bladed weapons and even three-month-old girls were raped. The people were literally abandoned to their fate.

Working side by side with the Nobel Peace Prize laureate

Amidst this unspeakable chaos, brave men and women stepped forward either to denounce, to help repair the deep wounds, or to hunt down these brutal offenders and bring them to justice. The person who would several years later become Colonel Honorine was at the time merely a police officer dedicated to bringing justice. She worked alongside a gynaecologist whose reputation extended beyond his surgery nestling in the hills around Panzi. He helped put back the pieces of the women’s shattered lives, both physically and mentally, while she took on the task of apprehending the perpetrators of these appalling acts. Some twenty years later, after receiving a Sakharov prize and numerous honours from around the world, the gynaecologist was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. *‘In Bukavu, Doctor Mukwege and I would receive anonymous letters threatening us. My children were also threatened.’* For this widow, who has raised eight children singlehandedly, the fear seems palpable when she speaks of her powerlessness in the face of threats which have had a direct impact on her children.

. . . The changes currently taking place have involved a whole series of obstacles which Colonel Honorine discusses with a hint of anger. *‘I work without resources, yet the work I carry out requires resources,’* she explains whilst highlighting the difference with which men and

women are treated within the same police force; *‘In my profession, men are allocated a sufficient budget, but as a woman I am denied the necessary resources. In addition, I earn a meagre salary. I am a mother, I have several children and I am also a widow so my children live poor lives.’* Apart from these deplorable living conditions, Maman Colonelle tells how she has been the victim of harassment by one of her superiors. *‘Just because we work side by side with men, does not mean we can escape their advances. . .’* There is silence for a second or two, and then she continues her testimony. *‘When you show that you will not automatically say yes to everything they want, you become a target for those above you. We women have to learn to say no.’* Besides the harassment at her workplace, Colonel Honorine has lost count of the number of times her orders have been cancelled or even ignored simply because she is a woman.¹⁹

Colonel Honorine works against the covering up of sexual violence, helps the victims, persecutes the culprits, speaks out, risks her life—but she has never won the prize, nor is her story told like the one of the Nobel Peace Prize. Although they are mostly not visible, there are often women behind such great prizes, paving the way, supporting their part but often not asking for recognition or prizes—from their own country or from Oslo. And they have to deal with sexual harassment in their engagement.

A gender perspective can unfold the stories behind the stories, looking deeper, giving justice to the experience of men and women and children, letting those who suffer become visible, and recognizing those who are doing the work!

The Still Unfinished Agenda of Gender Justice in the Churches

In the First and the Second Testament, we see how storytelling, sharing, make the Bible into a book of life, close to the context and to various situations of daily as well as extraordinary life. Till now, generations of human beings have linked their own stories to the old one and have gained peace, trust, hope, and confidence as well as critiques and challenges from this specific encounter.

19. Bashi, “Ihr Beruf? Colonel!” <https://www.boell.de/de/2020/10/20/ihr-beruf-colonel>; translation from French by Eriks Uskalis.

But even though the majority of churchgoers, in Germany, for example, are women (which might be the case in many other countries in the world), and many stories of female leadership and power could have been told and many experiences shared, strong representation of women in leadership circles is still missing.

This remains an open question: Why has this majority of women not changed the image of the church and reiterated those biblical stories like the one mentioned above of the judge and the widow? Why was the cry or the persistence not so strong that the image of the church would have changed fundamentally?

And now we also have the stronger influence of fundamentalist perspectives as well as that of Pentecostals.²⁰

Further, it is obvious that there is an increase in conservative non-inclusive theologies, which often see themselves as a living and active counterpart against so-called liberalism. They are striving to minimize the role and impact of women and to reject LGBTIQ+ persons.

The following table of the Lutheran World Federation indicates the regions where some churches are not ordaining women:²¹

Region	Number of member churches	Not ordaining yet	Ordaining
Africa	31	9 (29%)	22 (71%)
Asia	54	13 (24%)	41 (76%)
CEE	16	4 (25%)	12 (75%)
CWE	19	0	19 (100%)
LAC	17	0	17 (100%)
Nordic	6	0	6 (100%)
NA	2	0	2 (100%)
TOTAL	145	27 (18%)	119 (82%)

Here we are reflecting only on churches within the Lutheran Communion; some Lutheran churches have left the communion and have joined the Missouri Synod, a church that is strictly against women’s ordination. They are

trying to expand in Asia and Africa, while in America they are losing members as well—like all the mainline churches.

20. The role of women at the beginning of the Pentecostal movement was much stronger and more evident than it is now. This is partly because there are limits—no more than 25% female pastors; no female bishops; etc.—while, on the other hand, some of the founders were women. See Christ Gehrz, “The Role of Women in Pentecostalism,” 9 September 2021, <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/anxiousbench/2021/09/women-pentecostalism>.

21. See Lutheran World Federation, “More than 80 Percent of LWF Churches Ordain Women,” 2 June 2016, <https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/more-80-percent-lwf-churches-ordain-women>

Therefore, the number of non-women-ordaining Lutheran churches in reality is higher than the number of those reflected in the statistics above.

A German overview of the representation of men and women in leadership positions in church administration within the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) and her member churches indicates the change over a 10-year period: although the percentage of women in leadership positions has increased in nearly all churches, only two EKD member churches have reached 50 percent: the overall average in 2013 was 29 percent of female leadership positions in church administration.²² Most of the churches have a male CEO, although there are of course some exceptions.

The example from Germany is not an isolated one. In 2022, a workshop of African female leaders in the churches within the WCC community gathered at the Desmond Tutu Center in Cape Town. They mentioned the following topics to be taken up:

The programme included a reflection on the Africa we pray for and leaders were invited to share their dreams and prayers for Africa (and the world) informed by the areas of concern in their various contexts.

- Gender justice often being sacrificed on the altar of church unity;
- Cultural systems of domination are often still uncritically accepted as normative;
- Contextual concerns such as food security, sexual and gender based violence, climate justice, HIV and Aids, engaging with the younger generation;
- Theological doctrine, biblical interpretations and other technicalities are put forward as justifications for excluding women from leadership.²³

22. Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, *Gleichstellungsatlas der EKD* (2015), 24, <https://www.gender-ekd.de/download/Gleichstellungsatlas.pdf>. Unfortunately, the analysis of leadership positions in church administration is nearly 10 years old, but the tendency has not greatly changed yet.

23. See “Statement from the Inaugural Consultation of the WCC We will Lamentation” (May 2022), <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/women-church-leaders-consultation-may-2022>.

From all parts of the world, similar examples and tasks can be collected. All indicate that gender justice is still a verb in the church, is still something one has to strive for, and churches still have to have it on the agenda.

From the background of the human rights debate, the call is heard and should be heard again and again in all religious institutions and churches that equal gender representation is needed. That a conducive working environment—where women, men, LGBTIQ+ persons all feel at home and can develop and add their specific abilities to the richness and fullness of the church—is needed. An inclusive church might be the aim, might be the church of the future, but we are still on the way.

Some Final Thoughts for Further Consideration

1. There can be no human rights discussion and striving for dignity without half of the population. It is therefore an intrinsic value of human rights debates to search for equal representation. UN declarations and resolutions have mentioned this, but there is still a ways to go, maybe even a longer, hilly one and a longer distance.
2. No women, no peace: With UN Resolution 1325, gender justice and human dignity and rights are translated into the political arena and have set a new tone related to foreign politics and to the recognition of women in conflict situations which might create new initiatives and new access to reconciliation.
3. The old example of the widow insisting on her rights in front of a partly unwilling and judge who lacks understanding might still be the narrative to follow in many churches and faith communities that are shaped in a patriarchal culture and are focused on an often

very long history going back thousands of years. On Easter, his tory became a “herstory”²⁴: Mary and others carried the message of the empty grave and the resurrection, the possibility of life in the midst of death back to the disciples. What would Christianity be without the courage of the women to understand the signs of the times? Nevertheless, gender justice as a gender interpretation of human rights still needs many widows insisting, and it calls for women and men to tell the good news!

24. This term is used in relation to Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza’s book *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983).

4. And everywhere, both at the level of the UN or in one's own context or country, or in politics, economics, religious, or social spheres, it should be clearly stated that conforming to gender equality goes far beyond the counting of men and women in certain fields and areas of activities. Being in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the respective resolution based on the consideration of gender issues leads to a new and broadened understanding on inclusivity: men and women, youth and elders, LGBTIQ+ persons, people of various social and education levels should be the subjects of any process and activity to transform human rights into the reality on the ground in any specific context.