

## The Mother Tree

The “Mother Tree” is life’s source of vitality. From childhood we are taught “mighty oaks from little acorns grow”, and as we grow we discover that “little acorns from mighty oaks grow.” The source of life’s vitality is also the resource of all living existence, the sacred fruit of vitality, the “forbidden fruit.”

The “forbidden fruit”, life’s vitality, is also the fruit of consciousness/ conscience, of the knowledge of good and evil. We can’t avoid eating fruit but we can and must avoid wasting the source of life’s vitality, i.e., stop the wasteful consumption and exploitation (e.g., GMOs) that violate the Mother Tree and put at mortal risk the global ecology.

Every kind of tree produces fruit of its kind, apples, cherries, hickory nuts, plums, etc. What is universal is that “fruit” is the seed that insures the next generation of trees. If seeds are totally eaten or otherwise wastefully exploited there can be no sustainability, no new generation of trees.

What is true of all kinds of life is that the female of the species produces fruit from her deep-down self, which means that the vitality of all life is characterized by the “Mother Tree”, the female of the species. Motherhood is the “tree” bearing the fruit that sustains ecological vitality.

The existence and culture of life owe to female providence. When the fruit of the Mother Tree is wasted, life is violated, and life’s “original” vitality is put at mortal risk. The divine mandate “not to consume the fruit of the Mother Tree” is a command to not violate and consume eco-vitality. Motherhood (vitality) sources the webs of flora and fauna and also resources (feeds) individual human existence. This is the clear reason behind the biological basis of the theological understanding (of the forbidden fruit), and explains the insight and significance of Walter Brueggemann’s linking of the exploitation of women to nature’s exploitation. <http://ncronline.org/news/justice/biblical-narrative-economic-policy>

Contrary to Aristotelian philosophy and patriarchy’s theological fixation, the male does not produce the seed—the sperm is not a miniature male—the female produces the seed that produces new life. The persona of individual humankind is defined mainly by the mother’s genetics, not by the father’s. Dominion theology and patriarchal fixation have evolved together on a deceived perception that Eve came from the body of Adam.

Humankind and nature are at wit’s end from the spoiling of woman/ nature by patriarchal dominion, based on sexual misinformation and hyped male self-arrogation. As Vatican II has made the case, **A RADICAL REDIRECTION OF RELIGION AND CULTURE IS URGENTLY NEEDED**. Culture and religion now need women to lead the way to an authentic sense of interpersonal relationship, biology and theology.

Bad biology is bad theology; good biology is good theology. To John Courtney Murray’s line we can make an addition: “faith supposes reason, as **theology supposes biology**, as grace supposes nature.” If we are ever to get right with nature we must first get right with biology, with sex, with nature’s symbiotic vitality.

“Original Sin” is the wasting of Motherhood, the wasting of Nature’s Vitality.