

# A woman's talent is to listen, says the Vatican.

Level 1 | Elementary

## 1 Key Vocabulary

Fill the gaps using these key words from the text:

*document*                      *author*                      *personality*                      *humble*  
*faithful*                      *effect*                      *mature*                      *statement*

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ person does not think he or she is better or more important than other people.
2. A \_\_\_\_\_ person is one who is fully grown, like an adult.
3. A \_\_\_\_\_ person is one who always does what they have promised to do.
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a paper with important information in it.
5. If something has an \_\_\_\_\_ on something else, it makes it change in some way.
6. An \_\_\_\_\_ is a person who writes books, stories or documents.
7. A \_\_\_\_\_ is something that you say or write.
8. Your \_\_\_\_\_ is the kind of person you are.

## 2 Find the information

Look in the text and find the answers to these questions:

1. How many pages are there in the document?
2. Who published the document?
3. Who wrote it?
4. Who is Erin Pizzey?
5. Who is Catherine Pepinster?

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## A woman's talent is to listen

John Hooper and Jo Revill in Rome.

Last week the Vatican published a 37-page document about women in society. The author of the document was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the most important theologian in the Vatican. In the document, Cardinal Ratzinger writes about the typical characteristics of women. He says that women have the same positive characteristics as the Virgin Mary.

According to the cardinal, women are humble, faithful and welcoming and they know how to listen, how to praise and how to wait.

The document is an official Vatican statement, so it is probable that the Pope himself read it and perhaps made some changes to it. Many people will probably disagree with some of the things the document says. For example, it says that the fact that women can give birth to children has an effect on their personality. Women have the ability to give life so they are able to help others to grow and are able to protect them.

The document is called the *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World*. In the document Cardinal Ratzinger also attacks ideas that are not good for "the true progress of women". One of these ideas, he says, is the belief that

some people think women are less important than men. This idea causes problems, he says, because it seems to mean that if women want to be equal they must become enemies of men. Ideas like this could have a negative effect on the structure of the family, according to the cardinal.

The cardinal says that in this "war" between the sexes, the differences between men and women are becoming less and less clear. But the fact that women can give birth is a very important one, he says. This means that women become mature very quickly and are serious and responsible in their lives. Because of this they should be "present in the world of work and in the organisation of society".

The document received a mixed reaction from feminists and women writers. Erin Pizzey, the founder of the international women's refuge movement, said: "Catholic priests and bishops cannot marry so I don't think the Catholic Church should make statements like this."

But Catherine Pepinster, the editor of the British Catholic journal *The Tablet*, said many women would understand the feelings in the document. "It is typical of feminists to criticise this document without thinking. The document looks at differences between the sexes, but it also says that women have a big role to play in society."

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## 3 Comprehension check

Match the beginnings and endings of the sentences.

1. Women become mature very quickly ...
  2. The "war" between the sexes ...
  3. The cardinal says that women ...
  4. Some people say that if women want to be equal ...
  5. Erin Pizzey criticised the document ...
  6. Catherine Pepinster agrees with the document ...
- a. ... means that differences between men and women are becoming less clear.*
- b. ... they must become enemies of men.*
- c. ... because she thinks many women will understand the feelings in it.*
- d. ... because she doesn't think the Catholic Church should make statements like this.*
- e. ... because they can give birth to children.*
- f. ... are humble, faithful and welcoming.*

## 4 Vocabulary development - collocations

Find verbs in the text that go with the following nouns

1. \_\_\_\_\_ a document
2. \_\_\_\_\_ a document
3. \_\_\_\_\_ a document
4. \_\_\_\_\_ a statement
5. \_\_\_\_\_ problems
6. \_\_\_\_\_ birth
7. \_\_\_\_\_ a role
8. \_\_\_\_\_ changes

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## 5 Word building

Complete the table. Use your dictionary to help you.

	Verb	Noun
1.	publish	_____
2.	organise	_____
3.	state	_____
4.	disagree	_____
5.	protect	_____
6.	react	_____
7.	move	_____
8.	feel	_____

## 6 Grammar focus - irregular past tenses

Complete the table. Use your dictionary to help you.

	Present	Past simple
1.	read	_____
2.	say	_____
3.	make	_____
4.	understand	_____
5.	give	_____
6.	write	_____
7.	feel	_____
8.	become	_____
9.	grow	_____
10.	think	_____

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## Key

### 1 Key Vocabulary

- |           |           |              |                |
|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. humble | 2. mature | 3. faithful  | 4. document    |
| 5. effect | 6. author | 7. statement | 8. personality |

### 2 Find the Information

- 37
- The Vatican
- Cardinal Ratzinger
- The founder of the international women's refuge movement
- The editor of the British Catholic journal The Tablet

### 3 Comprehension Check

1. e; 2. a; 3. f; 4. b; 5. d; 6. c

### 4 Vocabulary Development                      Collocations

Find verbs in the text that go with the following nouns

- |                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. write a document   | 2. read a document  |
| 3. publish a document | 4. make a statement |
| 5. cause problems     | 6. give birth       |
| 7. play a role        | 8. make changes     |

### 5 Word Building

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. publication | 2. organisation |
| 3. statement   | 4. disagreement |
| 5. protection  | 6. reaction     |
| 7. movement    | 8. feeling      |

### 6 Grammar Focus. Irregular past tenses.

- |               |           |          |
|---------------|-----------|----------|
| 1. read       | 2. said   | 3. made  |
| 4. understood | 5. gave   | 6. wrote |
| 7. felt       | 8. became | 9. grew  |
| 10. thought   |           |          |