**Letters to The Tablet, August & September 2019**

**08 August 2019**

**Women in the Church**

May I make a contribution to the controversy in your pages on the ordination of women?

The fundamental consideration governing the ordination of women as priests should be based on the gifts of the sacrament of baptism. By that sacrament we are made partakers of the divine nature through the gift of grace which we receive. As sharers of that divine nature, women may worthily aspire to be ordained as priests and, indeed, deacons.  It should be regarded as a genuine development of doctrine.

In relation to the question of married men acting as priests, your 27 July issue provides an answer when it informs us that Cardinal Nichols is due to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Anglican ordinariate on 9 November.

 Other fundamental questions remain concerning the structure of the Church in a changing world but female priests and married priests should be viewed as part of the solution and not the problem.

(Dr) Brian P Murphy OSB
Glenstal Abbey, Murroe
Co Limerick, Ireland

**29 August 2019**

A very pertinent editorial [15 August]. Thank you.

I accept that celibacy is a very difficult path, the more so when the priest has a caring role among his parishioners. Temptation is ever present and is very difficult to resist. The hierarchy has a clear duty to supervise its priests and where necessary expose any wrong-doing to the civil authorities.

I applaud your campaigns for married priests and for the ordaining of women as deacons. Both are long overdue.

**Kerry Harding**
Goring-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

The run-up to the Amazon Synod has the hallmarks of an ultra-conservative coup. I imagine that the viri probati mentioned for Holy Orders will already be in positions of legislative and cultural governance within an isolated tribal group. To add to these powers the position of leadership in the local Church seems rather like straightforward integralism worthy of Bourbon Europe.

**(Fr) Christopher Hilton**
Manchester

**19 September 2019**

**Married priests**

Whilst I am sympathetic to the wounds suffered by Canon Bruce Ruddock (Letters, 31 August) following the desertion of some Anglican clergymen to the Roman Catholic Church because of the decision to ordain women, we Catholics are also suffering. We had the Ordinariate imposed on us.

What about Roman Catholic priests who have had the hard choice to make, stay faithful to their vocation or leave and get married? How do priests who left the priesthood and married feel when confronted by a member of the Ordinariate as their parish priest who is married and has a family? Has the Roman Catholic hierarchy asked them how they feel?

If married priests become the norm can women priests be far behind?

**Marion Tulloch**
Thirsk, North Yorkshire