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The *Catholic Courier* wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome original, signed letters about current issues affecting church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of a variety of opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the church. We will choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions of the letters writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters for length as well as legal concerns. With respect to errors in submitted text, we will correct spelling only. Anonymous letters and the use of pseudonyms are unacceptable.

Mail letters to: *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for verification purposes.

Letter on Spirit's urging draws fire

File photo

Can't accept author's case about dissent**To the editors:**

Maureen O'Neill's letter of Dec. 2 took exception to earlier letters concerning certain aspects of the Synod. Several issues are raised which warrant a counter response.

Initially, the point regarding the Synod "accomplished the will of the Holy Spirit" becomes difficult to accept when the "prophetic recommendations" of a diocesan Synod are at variance with the unequivocal contrary position of the Holy Father who is entrusted with the guidance and direction of the universal Church.

Secondly, the Church has experienced dissent in the past — not, as noted, to its

strength — but rather with dire consequences. Dissent led to Lutheranism, Calvinism, Anglicanism etc. It is more than an obstacle. In its present day form it is a malignancy on the Church body, tormenting disunity, strife and potential schism. It breeds organizations like Catholics for a Free Choice; women church with its with craft worship. Its theologians confuse and mislead the laity with their theories of scriptural demythologization. It encourages countless liturgical abuses under the aegis of a fabricated "Spirit of Vatican II" renewal.

The point that feminists are not upset with Jesus' maleness is more than suspect when one consults the speeches and literature of the most vociferous and ubiquitous proponents of the women church agenda — Rosemary Reuther, Mary Hunt, Sister Madonna Kolbenschlag et al.

To contend that ordination of women would not be a divisive factor is ingenuous. It already is and has been regardless of polls and Synod vote. The recent An-

glican Church ordination controversy at-tests to its divisive repercussions.

Regarding priestly celibacy, Scripture alone does not constitute the basis for Catholic doctrine. Sacred Scripture and Tradition, as affirmed by The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*), are the co-existing components of the Sacred deposit of the Word of God.

As for "inclusive" language, it is not what it pretends to be — namely a remedy for past discrimination. It is designed ideological symbolism — with obvious disdain for language discernment.

True, God is pure spirit — neither male nor female — but He is Father by will of creation of male and female and Christ's instruction to pray to "Our Father" and "He who sees Me, sees also the Father" (John 14:9). No other advocate necessary for endorsement of the Fatherhood of God.

A.J. Annunziata
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Jesus could have chosen women as apostles**To the editors:**

With reference to Maureen O'Neill's letter I have several comments. I don't have a problem with inclusive language when it refers to us, but I do disagree when it is applied to God.

In the first place, if one is trying to disprove the Fatherhood of God, her reference to the Baltimore catechism is not going to do it. God is referred to as Father many times in the catechism. Remember? "There are three divine persons in the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," or, "the Father is God and the first person of the Blessed Trinity." Want some more?

I guess the most overwhelming argument for the representation of God as Father comes to us from the One who knows the Father best (John 10:30 and 14:11). Jesus refers to God as Father throughout Scripture. Over 100 times in the Gospel of John alone, and He also had the audacity to call God Abba, or Daddy. Has Jesus Christ created a false image of God as Father? Or are the feminists creating the false image of God? I prefer to believe the One who not only tells the truth but who teaches us that He is the Truth.

The "maleness" of Jesus is essential if one understands the concept of Sonship in the Jewish tradition. In this tradition, when the firstborn son receives the father's inheritance he is then considered equal to the father in all things. Jesus could not have fulfilled God's plan, or the Messianic prophecies (Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 53, Psalm 22) as a woman.

While it's true that Jesus did not limit his apostles to celibates, He did limit the selection to males. Why? I don't know, except I do know that there were many women including His mother who were

available for His selection. Was He simply bowing to convention? I think not. Remember, He ate with tax collectors, saved the prostitute from being stoned, accepted water from a Samaritan woman at the well, healed on the Sabbath, and called the Pharisees a brood of vipers. This doesn't sound like a man who would discard His will for the traditions of men.

As Christians we are called to serve and not be served. There are countless ways to serve the Lord apart from being

a priest. Is Mother Teresa's service to the Body of Christ any less than Father McBrien's? Is the mother who instills her children with the message of Christ, or a sister who teaches a classroom of children the foundations of their Faith any less in service to the Lord than a Father Greeley?

Let us all serve, and trust that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide the Church.

Thomas J. Scott
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Heed Holy Father's arguments about women**To the editors:**

I would like to comment upon Maureen O'Neill's letter to the editors of Dec. 2. One of the paragraphs reads "Those who would limit the ordained priesthood to celibate males are on shaky ground Scripturally. No where have I been able to find the establishment of a celibate male priesthood by God the Creator or by Jesus."

Reading "Be Not Afraid" by André Frossard and Pope John Paul II I would like to relate the following: "Nevertheless, in what ever way the question is put, one cannot get away from the fact that the apostles alone heard the words 'Do this in memory of me' at the Last Supper, when the Eucharist was instituted. There was no woman among them, although there were many among Christ's followers.

The ministry of the Eucharist was from the start, at the very moment of its institution, too personal an act of Christ's to allow us to neglect the smallest aspect of it.

In fact at that decisive moment Christ acted in this way is sufficient indication and one that binds us in conscience. The Church abides by that without the inten-

tion of belittling women. The fact that she alone can be a mother, and not man, is not a sign of an inequality between them either. It is the nature of order. It is the same with the order of grace and charismatic order, where the gifts are different.

John Paul II put forward another argument of this subject: "When the Church abides by tradition of ordaining only men, I believe, in company with many theologians, that she retains for herself the character spouse which is so deeply rooted in all Biblical ecclesiology, especially in the letters of St. Paul.

"According to this magnificent analogy, Christ, the bridegroom of the Church, the gift of the redemptive sacrifice, the gift which has the Eucharist as sacrament. So he who celebrates the Eucharist, that is, he who by the power of, and in place of, Christ offers his own bloodless sacrifice, must be able to express that there is a gift from the bridegroom to the Church, his bride."

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