Opinion
Letters to the Editor



by NCR Staff

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Following are NCR reader responses to recent news articles, opinion columns and theological essays with letters that have been edited for length and clarity.

Assisted suicide

It would be hard to disagree with most of what Sr. Mary Haddad has to say on this complicated matter of care for the dying (NCR, March 26, 2026). What is remarkable

however is the contradiction at the very center of her position. She writes at one point, "We believe that every person, regardless of illness or disability, deserves to be seen, heard and cared for — not pressured or abandoned."

Why then does she refuse to hear those patients, who meet the requirements for physician aid in dying, and who persist in requesting it, despite all the obstacles that the legislation puts in place before the request can be granted? Why does she refuse to hear those patients who, given their medical condition choose, with a clear and determined mind, to die at a time of their choosing? Why does she walk away from them, thinking she knows better, when what she should be doing, if she feels she cannot accompany them, is to respect them and their right to die the way they have lived — with reasonable autonomy.

T. PATRICK HILL
Winchester, Virginia

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LGBTQ+ inclusion

As a gay Catholic man in a relationship of 45 years, I read with interest the column “With or without Rome, LGBTQ+ inclusion forges ahead” (NCR, March 11, 2026). When theologians in the 1970s began to discuss LGBTQ+ issues, I found hope as I had been in conversion therapy for 9 years without success and was suicidal. I found hope that I could integrate my Catholic spirituality and my sexuality, although I never imagined that I could become holy in the process. Now I know it is a

possibility.

In 1974 a Trappist monk-abbot told me and my spouse that the church would change its teaching on the subject but that it would not happen in our lifetimes. He said that the pain our community suffers from discrimination and condemnation from society and the church was like the blood of the early martyrs and it would change the church. I have held that hope ever since.

I have found my truth of being a gay Catholic man in relationship with my spouse and God within the institutional church. God has called me to himself and so I forge ahead.

JOSEPH GENTILINI
Columbus, Ohio

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Belgian bishop ordaining married men

The Catholic Church is facing a crisis in available personnel to manage all the responsibilities of parishes and dioceses. As Mr. Arocho Esteves reports (NCR, March 24, 2026) at least one bishop had read the signs and wants to act accordingly. This article dovetails in many respects with those which argue for greater women's leadership responsibilities in parishes including women in the permanent diaconate. We have married permanent deacons who, in many cases, would be honored as well as able to meet the occasion and serve as priests. I firmly believe that the church needs to read the prevailing cultural changes and adapt appropriately as any viable institution of necessity must.

CHARLES A LE GUERN
Mount Holly, North Carolina

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