

## **The Pope's decision to entitle women as well as men to be instituted to serve our parish community as Reader and as Minister of the Eucharist:**

The *Motu proprio* [his own decision] by Pope Francis today, is accompanied by a letter addressed to the Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Luis Ladaria, in which Pope Francis explains the theological motivations behind his decision. The Pope writes that “within the spectrum of renewal traced out by the Second Vatican Council, ***the urgency is being ever more felt today to rediscover the co-responsibility of all of the baptized in the Church***, and the mission of the laity in a particular way.”

And, citing the Final Document of the Synod for the Pan-Amazon Region, the Pope observes that “regarding the entire Church, in the variety of situations, it is urgent that ministries for men and women be promoted and conferred... ***It is the Church made up of baptized men and women that we must consolidate, promoting forms of ministry and, above all, an awareness of baptismal dignity.***”

### **Lay people and evangelization**

In his letter to the Cardinal, after recalling the words of Saint John Paul II that “regarding ordained ministries, the Church does not have the faculty in any way to confer priestly ordination on women,” Pope Francis adds that “regarding non-ordained ministries, it is possible, and today it seems appropriate, to surmount this reservation.”

The Pope explains that ***“to offer to lay persons of both sexes the possibility of accessing the ministries of Acolyte [Minister of the Eucharist including carrying out the purification of the sacred vessels used at Mass] and Lector [the proclamation of the passages of Sacred Scripture during Mass except the Gospel which is reserved to a priest or deacon], in virtue of their participation in the priesthood of the baptized, the awareness will grow, through a liturgical act (of institution) as well, of the precious contribution that many lay persons, including women, have been offering for some time to the life and mission of the Church.”*** He concludes that ***“the decision to confer these offices even on women, which entails stability, public recognition and a mandate on the part of the bishop, will make more effective everyone’s participation in the work of evangelization.”***

The word ***“co-responsibility”*** featured prominently in our bulletin on Sunday addressed to the parents of the children who will prepare this year for the celebration of Sacraments in our parish. Please see the decision by the Pope and his justification for this decision as being directed at encouraging as well as seeking your full, positive and active participation and that of all parishioners in the life of the universal [Catholic] Church experienced in the local church community - St. Brendan's.