

AL/2592

50, CAMPDEN HILL SQUARE,

W. 8.

4 Feb. 1933

Dear Madam,

Thank you very much for your letter. Of course I know your name well in connection with discussions on the ordination of women and am not surprised that you should disagree with what I say in Theology on the subject, though very sorry it gives you distress. The paper, however, was really written to suggest the spirit in which I should like women to approach all personal and pastoral religious work - where I both desire and expect them in future to have far more scope than at present. It was not directed against the giving of Priest's orders to women because I am afraid I do not regard this as a practical issue - at present anyhow. My objection to it, which is absolute, is chiefly based on the historic nature of the Apostolic Succession and the break with Catholic tradition involved. But the reason given in your letter for demanding the

priesthood seems to me, I confess, quite inadequate. The diaconate or membership of a religious order surely involves the Church's endorsement of her vocation, and gives a woman quite enough support and status for preaching, teaching, and in general all but the distinctly sacerdotal powers of the Sacred Ministry. I think an adequate development of the order of deaconesses should really meet all reasonable claims.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

*Ernest Underhill*

Mrs Roberts