

RCWP-Canada Ordains New Deacon

In the company of family and friends and the Levain House Church Community, Jane Kryzanowski of Regina, SK was ordained deacon in the Roman Catholic Women Priests movement on September 11, 2014 by Bishop Marie Bouclin at Windy Lake, Levack, ON. Jane shares this account of the ordination.

The whole ordination liturgy was very moving not only for me; many who participated expressed how profound it was for them. From the entrance procession with the song, "Will You Come and Follow Me," through the joyous recessional "Magnificat," my heart was bursting with fullness and my eyes streamed with tears of joy – the birthing waters of new life. I tried to focus on each moment and each movement of the liturgy in order to cherish the importance of this leap of faith on my journey into God.

The community that gathered for this occasion included the Levain House Church community of Sudbury who formed the choir and provided a pot luck supper after the ceremony, members of RCWP Canada, one of our daughters and her family, a couple from Michigan (a winter Texans like us), an ex-pat Regina woman who lives in Sudbury but is still an ardent Riders fan, and numerous people who were present in spirit – friends and supporters from across Canada and the USA.

As I entered the prayer room carrying the Christ candle, all the steps I have taken throughout my faith life came to this moment of accepting the invitation to follow Jesus on a path that leads, I know not where, but confident that it is the Way; the Way for me at this time on my journey of moving beyond saying I believe in justice for women in the church, and doing something about it.



The chosen scriptures were God's word of call and response in faith: Micah 6:6-8 (We are to do what is right, love justice and walk humbly with our God), from Hebrews 11 (the chronology of our ancestors who opened their hearts to God and responded to the call of the Divine), and John 4 (the encounter of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well; she became the first feminine theology student and the first evangelist).

Prior to the ordination rite, I was questioned by Bishop Marie about my readiness to be ordained for ministry in the Church. To each question I replied, "I am ready."

- ✓ Am I ready to serve with selfless dedication?
- ✓ Am I ready to guard the treasure of our faith and proclaim the Gospel in word and deed?
- ✓ Am I ready to live from the Spirit within, be a woman of prayer, and pray with and for all God's people?
- ✓ Am I ready to support the poor and sick, the homeless, and those in need?
- ✓ Am I ready to shape my life according to the example of Christ whose body and blood are entrusted to me to share?

Then I stood before the altar with hands extended as a gesture of wonder and awe before God, of openness, surrender, and readiness to follow Christ wherever he leads. The Litany of the Saints was sung invoking the “great cloud of witnesses” who model the leap of faith I was making. As the role of saints was chanted their presence and witness to Christ Jesus affirmed me in my resolve to answer the call of God.



The ordination rite consists in the Laying on of Hands and the Prayer of Consecration. Along with the Bishop and priests present, everyone else was invited to come forward and lay hands on my head. Feeling the touch of different hands embrace and bless me was very powerful. The community also participated in the prayer of consecration extending their hands to invoke the fullness of the gift of the Sacred Spirit upon me.



My daughter vested me with the stole I made which expresses my inner journey of evolutionary consciousness of God's call to me to be a priest. Bishop Marie gave me the book of Gospels, with the admonition: “Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you preach.” This is the role of the deacon: to be committed to being the presence of the Word in our world and proclaim the Gospel which is at the heart of everyone's freedom to live in the fullness of God's life and love. The ordination rite concluded with a greeting of peace by the Bishop and priests. I was then presented to the community with joyous applause.

The Eucharist continued as I set the table as a deacon for the first time. It was my privilege to announce, “Let us proclaim the mystery of faith,” and invite everyone in the Spirit of Joy that fills this day, “let us offer a sign of peace to those near you.” A friend assisted me with giving communion to all, serving the assembly first and we being the last to receive. Although I have been a communion minister many times in the past, giving communion to everyone this time was especially poignant as I looked tenderly into the face of each person, seeing in them what I offered – the Body of Christ.

How is what I am called to be as a deacon any different than any other disciple of Christ? It is in the radical call to stand for justice for women in the Roman Catholic Church when the institution insists that only men can be ordained. Women are regarded as invalid material for ordination, incapable of being ordained. God, however, does not see us this way. Jesus stood with women and raised them up to full dignity as daughters of God. I truly believe that the women's ordination movement is a force of Sophia Wisdom which is blowing across the earth to bring to God's people the fullness of life promised to humanity through mutual respect, love and compassion for all people.



After the liturgy we gathered for photos. The pot-luck supper prepared by the Levain community was hearty and delicious! I really enjoyed visiting with everyone over a glass of wine and the wonderful food, especially the tourtière!

The celebration may be over, but the service has just begun. Pray with me that I may be a faithful witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.