



South Dakota Episcopal **ChurchNews**

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HISTORY WAS MADE in the Diocese of South Dakota when the Rev. Karen Hall was ordained priest by Bp. Craig Anderson: the first woman ordained priest in SD. The ordination took place Nov. 16 at St. John's Lutheran Church, Madison. The Bishop also instituted her as priest-in-charge of the congregations at Madison, Flandreau, and Desmet. She had been serving them as deacons, and they welcomed her warmly as their priest.

Following Karen's ordination, she celebrated the Eucharist for the first time, flanked by Lutheran Pastor Brian Gentz, the Bishop, the Rev. Sydney Pratt (Ft. Thompson), and her husband, Fr. Stephen Hall, Brookings. The warmth of the Lutherans' welcome; the presence of witnesses from all over the Diocese and beyond, as well as Karen's parents, children, and other family members; the music by a special choir all added to the joy of her ordination.

Wanbli Tokaheya Toowa

...An open pastoral letter to the churches at Pine Ridge:

By the Rt. Rev. Craig B. Anderson, Bishop of South Dakota



Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was with these words that St. Paul began many of his epistles or letters to the various churches under his care. The letters of St. Paul were written to churches that were experiencing tension, internal struggle and at times open conflict. He wrote to provide guidance, encouragement and support.

While not as eloquent or as lengthy as St. Paul, I am writing this letter or epistle to provide guidance, encouragement and support for the ministry on the Pine Ridge. It is an open epistle because many of the things that you are experiencing are problems and issues that are present in other parts of the Diocese as well as other dioceses within the Episcopal Church of the United States.

While the problems that we face today are at times felt as unique, many of the same problems plagued the Church in its infancy some two thousand years ago. Tension, conflict and turmoil seem always to have been a part of the life of the Church.

While the Church is the abiding presence of God through Jesus Christ, manifested as the Holy Spirit "wherever two or three are gathered in His name", the Church is also people, and can be defined as people coming together to pray, to worship and to care for one another.

Because the Church is made up of everyday folks, in the present as in the past, tension and misunderstanding characterize, to some extent, the life of the Church. Such tension and conflict can be either destructive or a source of renewed strength.

Vine Deloria said it

Twenty five years ago, the Ven. Vine V. Deloria wrote an article entitled "No Cheer" in the *South Dakota Churchman*. Here is an excerpt from that article:

and they are getting along fine (I am one of them, I suppose).

"Far, far too many others, however, are suffering physically from no means or inadequate aid; far, far too many on their home grounds or in cities are living in dwellings no Indian would have looked at thirty years ago. Economic calamity is breaking the spirit of the Indian people and their enthusiasm for life. My spirit weakens right along with theirs.

"Something should be done about it, all right; but a direct uninvolved approach is needed. We can do without the usual sideline activities, programs and efficiently supervised excursions which only complicate, blur, and, in the end, nullify objectives.

"You can't blame the non-Indian for his lack of understanding, nor yet the Indians who have been 'civilized', which so-called civilization thinks that analysis and manipulation is the only way to solve problems. Thus, the experts hold panels, forums, workshops, give lectures, conduct surveys, polls, publish books, make movies, slides, and so on and on until they look like an exhausted kitten, lying on its side by the spool of thread it tangled with."

It would appear that Father Deloria's words describe not only the situation twenty five years ago but also accurately reflect some of the problems that we confront today both on and off the reservation here in the Diocese of South Dakota as in other parts of the Church.

Tried for solutions

Fr. Deloria's words serve to describe my observations and feelings in coming to the Diocese as Bishop a little over two years ago.

Within the past two years we have tried a number of ways to address some of the inner tensions and problems with the hope that this would allow us to move beyond internal conflict to the mission and ministry of the Church.

We began by assigning additional

and three deacons it was hoped that new forms and a corporate sense of ministry would emerge. This has not happened, and in fact tensions seem to have increased.

Second, the Pine Ridge Deanery was restructured a little over a year ago with the idea of including representation from all the churches on the Pine Ridge. It was hoped that this new structure might provide for increased participation and better representation in attempting to address some of the ongoing problems within the Pine Ridge Deanery. This new structure continues to struggle in an attempt to provide lay as well as ordained leadership on the Pine Ridge.

Over the past year and a half I have met with this group as well as individual congregations and on three separate occasions with the clergy of the Pine Ridge in an attempt to call for reconciliation and a new spirit of cooperation in shared ministry. In spite of these calls for reconciliation and cooperation, tension has increased.

Changes in leadership

Most recently I have made some changes within the ordained leadership on the Pine Ridge owing to mounting conflict.

For the listing of these changes, please read my news release on the opposite page.

It is my hope that these changes will result in a renewed sense of ministry for the priests and congregations involved.

Respond to Fr. Deloria

Recent events and efforts serve to emphasize and underscore the need for a response to Fr. Deloria's observations and reflections some twenty-five years ago.

When will the time, energy and emotion spent on internal conflict be directed to addressing the issues of pain and suffering amongst the people on the Pine Ridge?

How can we regain a sense of Church as a community of reconciliation and love?

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tions and the challenges that confront us in the days and years ahead.

Will Fr. Deloria's words describe where we will be twenty-five years from now as well as where we were twenty-five years ago?

Within the next twenty-five years we can anticipate changes both within the culture and the Church. Such change will include changes in lay and clergy leadership in the national Church, the Diocese and local congregations.

How we live and how we minister to one another today will shape the future of the Church as God's people. If there is a growth of love and respect for one another, we can anticipate a strengthened and vital Church, a strengthened and vital people.

Renew your love

As we begin this Advent season, a period of reflection, preparation and fasting, I invite you to renew your love of your Savior, your Church and one another as brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus.

Having begun this letter with a greeting from St. Paul, I conclude with St. Paul's final greeting to the church at Corinth: "Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love."

"So I affirm you; so teach the Church"

An open letter to my wife on the occasion of my fifth anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood and the announcement of her ordination to the priesthood.

Dear Karen,

We laughed about it this morning, my sulking because I cannot preach at your ordination. While it is true that it is not just a privilege for the Bishop to preach at your ordination, but more importantly, in this case, a necessity, I had some things I wanted to say on that occasion not only to you, but to the Church as well. So I am going to say them here.

Lesson one

First, Brian Gentz remarked that faith has always been taught by mothers and, therefore, the reality of a woman in the priesthood will be a much-needed corrective to our male-dominated, overly theological and, therefore, overly rational view of God. This is probably one of the more profound insights given to me during this whole process. There is, of course, a dialogue between faith and theology. But the Church in general and our Church, the Episcopal Church, in particular, tends to approach God with its head instead of its heart.

This is the first of my lessons learned from my five years of priesthood: I have often gotten systematic theology confused with God.

You more than any other, who has taught me and reminded me of that eternal truth of I John that "God is love." So I affirm you; so teach the Church.

Lesson two

In the early years of our marriage, you and I fought for control of our home until we about destroyed that home. Then

together in frustration and the humility of mutual defeat, we found that argument to be irrelevant, for we found out together that Christ was the head of our house. That was a painful lesson for us, but it was important and we have learned from it.

This is the second lesson of my five years of priesthood: anyone who presumes to take headship away from Christ cannot be His disciple.

You, more than any other, have called me to account for those moments when I was forgetting who was Lord of my life. So I affirm you; so teach the Church.

Lesson three

God has appointed us to be stewards of four children. Together we have sought to enable them to be what God has called them to be. Yet we have done so in the face of the knowledge that they were created in the image of the inexhaustible and unknowable God and were themselves, therefore, mysteries. There have been times when you and I, having done what we thought was the best we could, have clung to each other while they fell down or got it right.

This is the third lesson of my five years of priesthood: I can and must preach the word of God as effectively, accurately, and lovingly as I can, but I cannot predetermine for others what they will do with that word.

You, more than any other, have

reminded me that our children ultimately belong to God, and we finally must entrust them to His care. So I affirm you; so teach the Church.

Lesson four

You and I have learned over time about vocation to marriage. We have learned that the phrase to "become one flesh" means not a magical zap at the altar, but a process of a forging in the crucible of life. It is a process conducted by the same Holy Spirit who whipped and flogged Jesus into the desert to be tempted by Satan. We, at times in the heat of our trials have been alienated from each other, wounded each other, have been angry and cruel. But the Holy Spirit has taught us, by means of all that, the strength of God's steadfast love.

This is the fourth lesson of my five years of priesthood: there is no one beyond the power of God's cross to redeem, even me.

You, more than any other, have taught me the healing power of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. So I affirm you; so teach the Church.

Lesson five

You and I have just returned from a retreat conducted by our spiritual mentor, Alan Jones. At that retreat Alan spoke of the icon that depicts the three visitors to Abraham who sit at table gazing at the cup offered them by him. We listened as Alan read us Moltmann's affir-

mation that this icon of the Trinity, "lovingly inclined towards one another, concentrated on the chalice of the cross," was the icon of the Church and how the Church was to be Church. . . all of us. . . lovingly inclined towards one another, concentrated on the chalice of the cross.

This is the fifth lesson of my five years of the priesthood: without constant maintenance and spiritual nourishment for myself, I will never be able to nourish the people committed to my care.

You, more than any other have called me to prayer, to spiritual renewal, to recover the vision. So I affirm you; so teach the Church.

Lesson six

Karen, to say that "I know you" would be a lie. I don't. After two thousand years for God to suddenly start calling women to the priesthood is at least a bit confusing. (You would think that having done that, He would have least given us a clue about how to address them. But it seems that that problem for us is of no concern to Him.)

All of which is to say that I don't know God either. What I do know is that He has called you to share in the priesthood of His Son. To that ministry you bring, as I have tried to say above, many gifts, His gifts, for us. I am proud of your courage in the face of many difficulties to try to be faithful to His call.

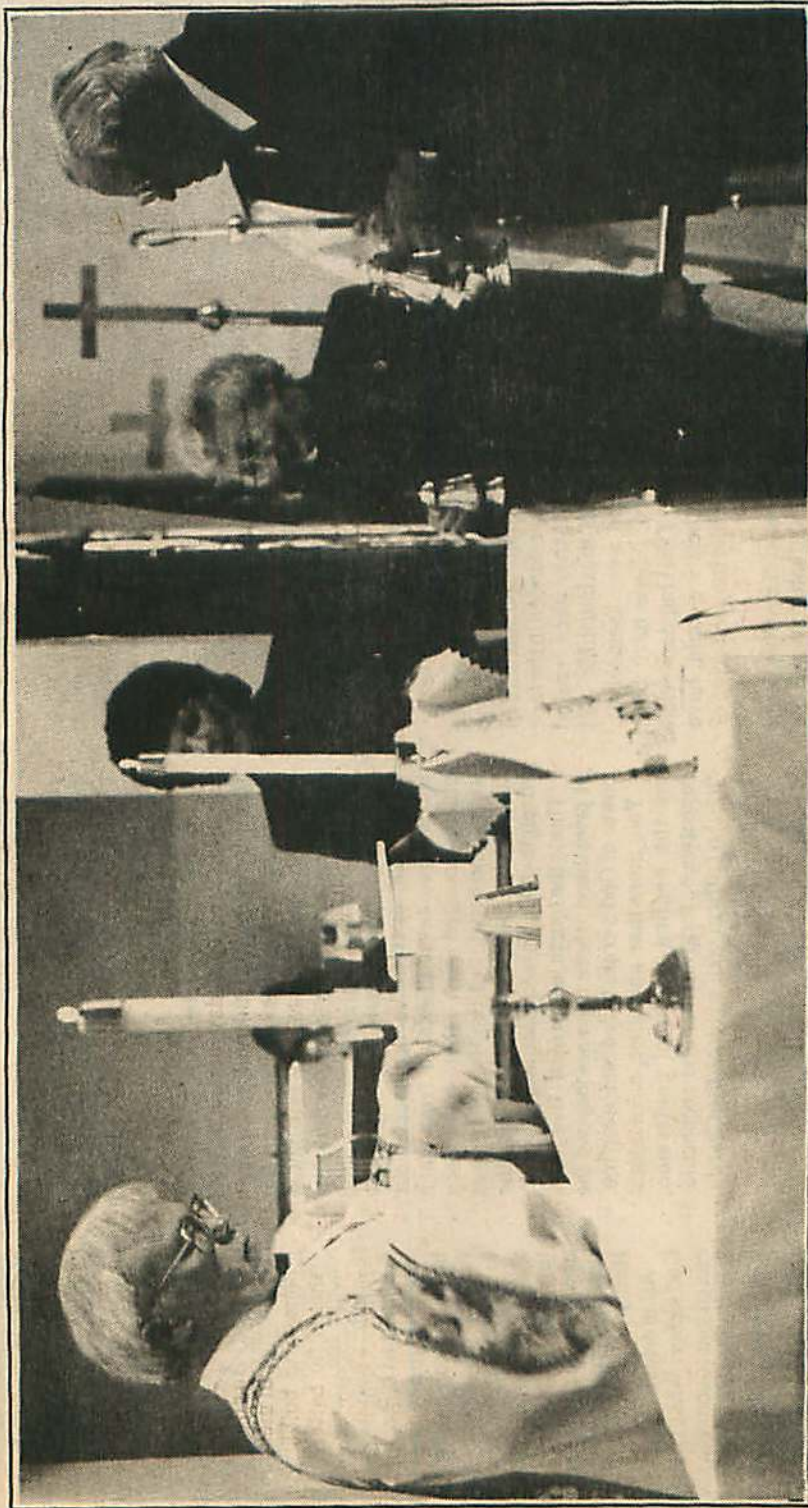
If you will be His person for the Church as you have been His person for me, the Church will do well. To that I can testify. For that I am grateful. God bless you.

summer long, I have been seeing the plight of my Indian people. Many Indians farm, own lots of cattle, or have good jobs

Pine Ridge. Today we have more ordained clergy on the Pine Ridge than we have had in many recent years. With six priests

ferences to the celebration of our differences as a unified Church? It seems to me that these are the ques-

BISHOP ORDAINS JOHN SHEPARD DEACON



JOHN SHEPARD prepares altar for Eucharist after his ordination to diaconate Nov. 1 by Bp. Anderson at St. Thomas, Sturgis. Assisting him are his wife Sheryll and parents Leota and Tom (SF). John, an attorney, has lived in Sturgis 15 years and been active in parish and Diocese. He continues to practise law, and, as a deacon, serves St. Thomas under supervision of Fr. Ed Howell. Duties include visitation and bringing Communion to sick and shut in; counseling; and, in the wider community, seeking out and assisting the sick, helpless, and those without voice or power in society.