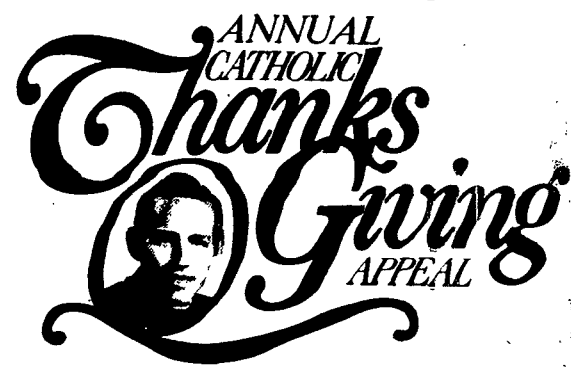


**Bishop's Ministries—
—Tribunal
1983-84**



Episcopalians Celebrate Ordination Anniversary

Henrietta — A service to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the first ordination of women as priests in the Episcopal Church will be held 3:30 p.m., Sunday, July 29 at St. Peter's Episcopal Church here.

The celebration marks the anniversary of the controversial July 29, 1974, ordination to the priesthood of 11 women deacons from eight dioceses of the Episcopal Church, in the United States. Three retired Episcopal bishops performed the ceremony at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia. The "irregular" ordination was the first in the history of the Episcopal Church, at a time when its laws did not allow the ordination of women as priests or bishops.

The Rev. Merrill Bittner, one of the 11 priests, will preach at the July 29 service. Now living in Newry, Me., she was a deacon in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester when she and the

other women deacons acted to take what they describe as a "valid and right" step toward priestly ordination.

Clergy women now serving in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester will join with Bishop William G. Burrill, Bishop of Rochester, to celebrate the Eucharist.

Much of the service music and readings will be the same of those used at the 1974 rites, from the lectionary for the feast of Mary and Martha of Bethany.

The women and bishops involved in the ordination a decade ago risked censure by the wider Church, in their home dioceses and by other bishops. Most of the women priests were prevented from exercising faculties by their

bishops. The oldest, the Rev. Jeannette Piccard, died at 86 in 1981. The others now hold parochial and non-parochial positions, including two professorships at one of the Episcopal Church's semi-

naries. At the 1976 meeting of the Episcopal Church's General Convention, a triennial legislative assembly of clergy and lay delegates, the Church approved the ordination of

women to the priesthood and episcopacy. Following that action, Bittner was received as a priest in the Diocese of Rochester. The following day, the first woman priest in the Episcopal Diocese of

Rochester was ordained under the new Church laws. Five women priests now preside in parishes in Honey Falls, Sodus and Walcott, Avon, Henrietta and Savona.

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