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My Journey at Glory to God Old Catholic Church— by Deacon Tammy M. Wood

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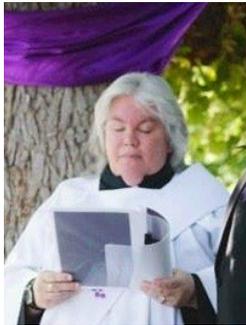
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When I was given the task of writing about being a Deacon, I didn't know where to begin the article. So, I will start with my first thought of wanting to be a missionary which was at the age of 14. I was involved with Acteen's (where teen age girls studied and did projects concerning world missions) at The Southern Baptist Church in Clearfield, Utah. I was always involved in church due to my upbringing from my mom and grandmother.

Fast forward, I was introduced to Glory to God through a co-worker. She asked me to come to church with her one Sunday and I have been here ever since.

In October of 2008 my mom passed away. In November and December two very good friends also

passed away that I had the honor of hanging out with. Gringo, my companion dog also passed away on December 31st of the same year. It was to say the least pretty devastating to me. I was lost in simple terms. Being in prayer and knowing in my heart that they were in a better place is what finally got me out of being lost.



I started my journey to be a priest in the spring of 2009 when I called up Father Jim and asked him if I could make an appointment with him, because I had something important to talk to him about. We met

and he gave me some information and websites to look at and most important of all pray about the decision. I did and met with Father Jim again. We set up a schedule for me to start my studies.

In the spring of 2011, Father Jim came to me and asked if I would be interested in going to Cuba, New Mexico. He said

pray about it first before you give me an answer. I asked why, and he said it was to help care for Father Frank Murphy (a long-time friend of Father Jim's) I did what he asked, I prayed! Arrangements were made for me and off I went to Cuba, New

Mexico. What a change of scenery for me, so quiet and peaceful it was hard to sleep. The hard part was caring for someone who did not want to be cared for! Getting into a routine of eating, drinking and taking medication when you are asked then told by a woman was trying the patience of both of us. The

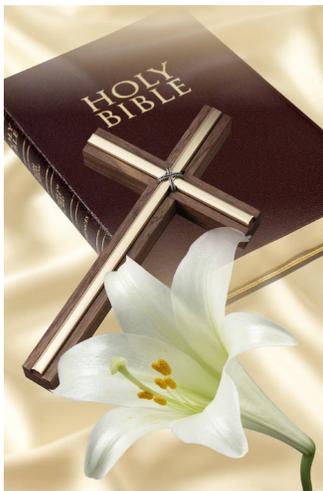
Lord does have a sense of humor! It was all part of my deacon training because of the things that Father Murphy taught me, no one else could have done that during that time of my journey. I am grateful for being able to spend time with him in Cuba. When he was able to travel again he visited us at Glory to God.

On August 6, 2011 I started at St. Vianney Seminary in Ogden, Utah where more learning started to take place and continues today. Whether it be from a prayer, book, CD, DVD, lecture or hands on learning, the mind is fine with the knowledge that I will be able to put into practice in my lifetime.

On August 4, 2012 I was among several individuals ordained as Deacons and also two Priests were ordained that day. What a powerful heartfelt day that was at Glory to God. People traveled from all over to attend the ordinations of ones who have chosen their vocation to serve The Lord by serving others.

Oh Yes, my perspective on being a Deacon (which comes from the Greek word diakonos, which means servant) is that this is The Lords plan for me not mine. I just had to be open to listening to what was being said and not fight it! The Lord shuts one door and opens many doors instead... being a Deacon is not just being dressed in a cassock and surplice on the weekends during Mass.

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Prayer—Deacon Darren Hayes

When one is called to a life of serving others around them and serving God and taking those steps to live out the things that God has called us to do there is one thing that so many people do not think about when they first start developing and learning more about their calling and that is to take the time to really pray and to strengthen their relationship with Jesus.



I still remember when I first really dove into prayer. I was so afraid of what would be discovered and what I would be able to talk to God about, at the time I had felt that I had been completely abandoned by God so why should I take the time to pray to him why should I spend my time with him. I was afraid that the answers I received would be full that of a God full of hatred for someone that he couldn't stand to be around.

Throughout my praying and growing in my relationship with Jesus I discovered just how wrong I was about ever believing that God hated me, that he most definitely wanted to be around me and had always been and what I thought was my time was actually his time.

Prayer is something that we should all strive to do, it isn't something that we should be afraid of, it isn't something that we should put to the side until we have the time, we should be making the time for prayer not placing it on the back-burner. It is something that we should aim at growing at with every day. Prayer after all is a necessity.

So what helps you pray, do you have a

certain way that you breathe? A certain chair that you sit in your house or outside of your house? Do you pray with music? Do you pray with a candle lit or none?

Do you pray in a certain position? There are so many ways and techniques that you can use in order to pray. As long as you are relaxed when you pray that is what is most important, you want to be in a place where you can be able to share anything and everything with God.

Another thing that we should remember when we are praying is to eliminate outside distractions that are surrounding us, so if your dog is an avid barker like mine your best plan would be to go somewhere where your dog is not or put your dog somewhere else within your house during your prayer time.

We should take the time to let those around us know that we are praying as we gear ourselves to be in a peaceful place and gather our thoughts and our body and soul to be geared towards knowing that God is with us and that God can hear us and that through our prayers and conversations with him we will hopefully hear his answers.



It is funny when I first started praying again how awkward silence is, even in church when there was moments of silence I found myself wandering in thought looking for things to keep me distracted because I wasn't used to the silence, for me now the greatest place to pray is my vehicle, I am calm things are quiet and I am alone. Though it doesn't help with the distraction of driving and trying to pray at the same time my next is a side chair looking out the side window. These are the two places I pray at the most.



Remember there is no reason to rush things think of your praying time as the way of The Mass, there is no set time, just allow the Holy Spirit to flow through you, allow yourself to take the time remember you are talking to your best friend. Treat it as such, it should be easier to talk to God then with any other person in your life after all he is all knowing so he already knows the things that you are going to tell Him. He just wants to hear it from you.

Prayer is an essential part of our daily life; it keeps us in a closer relationship with God and helps us to grow in our lives. Reevaluate your prayer life constantly because there is always more room to grow and if you seem to be having issues with prayer talk with others around you they might have ideas to increase your prayer techniques.

God Bless

*If you wish to have an article or news item included in **OC-COA Newsletter**, please contact Bishop Jim Morgan or Mr. Minott Gaillard. This is just an attempt to share with each other and give us a chance to "promote" each other when someone does something good that we'd like to copy—or tries something that doesn't work—and we won't try that—bottom line, we'd just like to open communication channels—share **lessons learned**—share our blessings. Minott is at wmg937@aol.com. Please submit articles no later than the 15th of the month.*

Rebirth and Renewal—by Sister Ann Roe

“It is not more surprising to be born twice than once; everything in nature is resurrection”

-Voltaire

Lent is here. Ash Wednesday, with the somber reminder that from dust we came and to dust we shall return, gives me pause. I am at an age where physical death has become tangible, as I witness family members and friends who have always been there...not be there anymore. I hear a funny story and still reach for the



phone to share it with my Mom.

In nature, new life bursts forth from the grey and skeletal remains of winter. There are those weeks in February when I despair that the snow and ice will never leave...and suddenly, out of the sodden earth, green shoots appear.

The Stations of the Cross are affecting me differently this year. In the past, following His sorrowful path aroused a lot of emotions—anger at Pilate, disgust with the crowds, pity, grief. This year, because I am just now understanding the full depth and breadth that pride plays in my life, what is piercing my heart is how sweetly and patiently Jesus bore the very worst, meanest, ugliest punishments, and not

once cried, “It’s not fair!” or cursed the soldier who put the crown of thorns securely on His head. He did not cherish a grudge against the Pharisees.

In my life, pride runs deep and comes in every color. I am so ready to be a victim, so quick to judge, so willing to gossip, so fearful of confrontation because it might make me look bad. As long as I stay stuck in that mode, it will forever be icy February.

Our Beloved Jesus, however, knew what the big picture was. My prayer is that He will help me follow Him, to have faith and hope and especially love in my heart to be worthy of His eternal springtime.

My Journey at Glory to God Old Catholic Church—Cont’d

Yes as a Deacon, I participate in Mass and other liturgical ceremonies. I have had the opportunity to preside over a baptism, a funeral and two weddings. Each of them was every special in their own right. The first one, was for my niece Randi, she had the wedding at my parent’s house with close family present. The second one was on December 23, 2013 for a couple that had been together over 18 years; Steven & David had been waiting in line since 5 AM at the Weber County Court House when I met them; I had told them who I was with and that I was there to assist couples in getting married before a judge puts a stop to same sex marriages in the State of Utah. We are still friends today (it may have to do with we all have in Social Work in common).

People just see a glimpse of a deacon’s ministry; I have the unique role of performing miscellaneous work around the church, from answering the telephone, folding bulletins, cleaning restrooms, laying titles to running the sound booth when needed. I see doing these things as helping prepare me in my journey to be a better per-

son, not as doing chores at church or it is some other person’s job to do. I assist in leading the Holy Rosary on Saturday evenings before Mass, which gives me time to center myself with prayer after having a busy day of studying and working around the church before going to Mass at 6 PM. Once a month, I try my best to help with the seminary breakfast that we put on at Murphy Hall of the last Sunday the month. As you can see, it is not about being a woman or man, it is about the Lord putting it in your heart for **You** to have the vocation of being a Deacon or a Priest.

Through my studies on leadership, how to talk with people about Christ, Catholic History, Traditions and ongoing training, I have become more patient with others because I have not traveled their journey. So that helps me live a more servant life than a self-serving one. Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-40 “You shall love The Lord your God with all your heart, and with your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

On these two commandments hang all the law and the Prophets”. That means I am a witness for Christ, by reading the Gospel, spending time in prayer and also caring for the members of Glory to God, welcoming visitors, feeding /clothing the poor, going and visiting the homebound, or just being there to listen to someone.

In conclusion, my perspective on being a Deacon is that I continue living my life serving others. I enjoy being able to pray for others, helping where needed and show others by example that because you have a disability that you are still able to continue with your vocation whatever it might be.

If you are ever in Ogden, Utah, stop in and fellowship with us, you are more than welcome.

Something to think about: If you see someone sitting alone or you don’t know, go up to them and smile, tell them that you are glad that they are here!

May the Grace and Peace of The Lord be with You Always!

A Holy Lent—by Mother Rachael Christian, O. S. B.

So what do you answer when someone says, “Lent, we don’t observe that, especially not giving up something, but it is a nice idea and maybe I will try giving something up. “ Most of my friends are giving up things like chocolate, or coffee, or watching a certain show. One of the kids in my Sunday School class announced last Sunday... “Sister Rachael, I don’t have to give anything up for Lent, my iPod was stolen.” We all laughed. But what she was saying, every one of us will go through at some point. Facing the facts about our walks with God, or without Him, is a tender spot in us. Something to really make us think about our lives and what truly is the important choice to sacrifice for forty days. iPods, games, TV, homework, (yes, another round of laughter). What about giving up negative thoughts and words and responding in another way, say, with compassion, understanding, and above all, love. Who was it that sacrificed His very Life for us, Jesus! And what he went through those 40 days in the desert where Scripture says at the end of them, he was hungry. The angels did not minister to him, until he had beaten Satan at the war of words. Words, they themselves define who we are and who we are not, yet.

For me, Lent is a time of deep solitary communion and communication with God. It is not just an hour, or even 40 days, (though each year, those 40 days are a hidden blessing for me to get rid of my selfishness that creeps in as Easter wanes and Ordinary time seeps back into my soul. So how do I, you, or any one make Lent a time of holiness with God? With prayer, and a quiet time alone each day to celebrate the vision of love that comes from God; then, coming through our own deserts, we too will be hungry for the One Presence that can and will sustain us, Jesus.

To keep a holy Lent, is really this...do as Jesus did...read the Scriptures, become familiar with them, like they are your arm or leg or even a toe or thumb. I have to say this: when we received ashes, on Ash Wednesday, my life began to stir, change swept me like a

flood and I grew quiet. Still. Reflecting on all I had experienced to that moment in time. It was not always the fragrance of a rose, more often it was the smell of mud infested with weeds and broken limbs. I felt ashamed for what I had been not even 24 hours prior... grasping, blindly speaking and not caring who or what I said, just wanting to be heard, noticed and all the other adjectives that a person has that defines them in the people pleasing co-dependent cycle I live on.

But then came Stations of the Cross; we see these wonderful wood images of the last hours of Jesus and often because they are there, we don’t see them. I don’t see them. That first night of Stations, recovering from recent neck surgery, I was keenly aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit listening to our blended prayers and minds following Jesus to the end of his life, but the glorious morning of Easter waits! But that night, I thought, what would I do differently now that I have seen Him as he was before the crowds, am I so above him, do I dare place myself in the same level as He is...certainly NOT! I know that I am weak, I would run screaming into the night if someone came and took me from my friends, and beat and pummeled me to smithereens just in the name of it is right for one man to die, than a whole nation.

So my holy Lent is about obedience. Hearing God in the silence of my heart, yet my ear hears tunes unrelated to the world. Soft music and somber Gregorian chant, heavenly voices that whisper in my ear, I am here, do not be afraid, listen with your spirit and let your heart hear the words of love I send you. (the I being Jesus) that soothes my spirit and regenerates my soul. Lent is about finding the leaf bursting through the hard winter ground, and that ground is my heart. It is about giving up my desire to be heard and just be available to encourage, not to speak unless asked, and not to offer unwarranted opinions or suggestions. To be more like Mary, Jesus’ Mother and my own spiritual one; the words she spoke were few “do whatever he tells you.”

And those words changed lives from now until His triumphant return. This Lent, I want to find that place God has made holy in me and live honestly, true to my image of what God instilled in me when I was 4 and let go of when I was a teenager. I want to say, Lord, let your will be done in me. And mean to follow Him, for after all, there is one scripture that sounds loud in my heart: “Unless you give up family and friend and mother and father, sister and brother for my sake” ...to which he adds,” if you do so...You will receive mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, houses, friends”, more than you can conceivably imagine. This Lent I offer my life to my Savior, not to any one person can I give it, for it is not mine to give. For so many years I thought it was, but one day, not long ago, Jesus reminded me of when I was 4 and He said, you will do great things for Me, and when you are done, then you will return to the Father who sent you and you will know peace. Large order for a 4 year old; but as I look back over the 53 years I have lived, it is true, while wanting to be a part of things, I was set a part to know God and to share His love. Even if it hurts in the honesty of it, it is better I offer the truth then see a friend or family member lose life. I just now realized, following Jesus is Life, is Truth, is the Way, for all love is never more precious than when God pours that first breath of life into the baby’s mouth and it becomes a living squalling body of energy growing up to be a person living, loving and dying. And for me, now, I cannot stand to see the suffering I have caused and cannot mend, or, hear the poison that drips from my tongue and not taste sickness and disease. When I receive His Body I am not loathe to say, but eagerly do I do I say, thank you Jesus, and when I receive his Blood, I beg him, please Lord, make me more like you. I believe Lent can be for everyone who wants to know Him, a time to gather and let go of old hurts, grudges, and sufferings and let the shower of Love bring a holy light that soothes into the heart and sets us free. Come Lord Jesus, set us free!