

For immediate release
From Roman Catholic Womenpriests
www.romancatholicwomenpriests.org
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Historic Ordinations of Roman Catholic Women in U.S.

On Monday, July 31, 2006, 8 U.S. women will be ordained priests and 4 women will be ordained deacons in the Roman Catholic Church. The ordination will take place on a chartered boat that will depart from Pittsburgh, PA at 3:00pm (1500 hours) E.D.T., and will sail on the Three Rivers: the Allegheny, the Monongahela and the Ohio, Bishops Gisela Forster, Ida Raming and Patricia Fresen of Germany will preside. The women being ordained come from California, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Florida, Wisconsin and Kentucky.

On Saturday, June 24, 2006, the same three bishops will ordain four women in Europe. The ordination will take place on Lake Constance between Germany, Austria and Switzerland. One Swiss, one American and a German woman living in the USA will be ordained to the priesthood. Another American will be ordained a womandeacon.

Just as, by her example, our foremother Rosa Parks led white America to the understanding that they must examine their conscience and recognize the sin of racial prejudice, the womenpriests and womendeacons lift up the issue of gender equality before the Roman Catholic Church. By offering a new paradigm of gender equality, womenpriests and womendeacons affirm that women, as well as men, can and do image Jesus Christ.

The goal of Roman Catholic Womenpriests is to bring about the full equality of women in the Roman Catholic Church. At the same time we advocate a new model of priestly ministry based on union with the people with whom we minister. We desire neither a schism nor a break from the Roman Catholic Church, but instead are rooted in a response to Jesus who called women and men to be disciples and equals in living the Gospel.

Bishops Gisela Forster, Ida Raming and Patricia Fresen were ordained by bishops in full Apostolic Succession. Bishops Forster, a philosopher, and Fresen, a theologian, were ordained secretly by Roman Catholic male bishops in order to avoid Vatican reprisal. Bishop Ida Raming, a renowned scholar, ordained to the episcopacy in June 2006, has done extensive research on the canon laws of the church. She is, together with Dr. Iris Mueller, who will also attend the ordination as priest, a foremother of the women's ordination movement.

These historic ordinations challenge an unjust law that keeps women subordinate in the Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Womenpriests community affirms that the full equality of women in the church, including their inclusion in the priesthood, represents the voice of God in our time and is a gift to the entire church.

Press and Media: Those who plan to cover ordinations in Pittsburgh, contact Joan Houk at rcwpinfo@comcast.net