

I remember going to a Memorial Day Mass at the National Cathedral in Washington, when we were there for the PAHS Reunion, and seeing a woman on the altar. What an Epiphany that was for me. That one service started me thinking that my vocation was not a figment of my imagination and I understand how our commitment to God and our actual lives get so intertwined that we sometimes do not stop to see the beauty in both of them. My road to Ordination has been a long circuitous one. Raised Roman Catholic I saw the Church start to evolve from a closed members-only organization to one that reached out to the world. But over the years it fell short of embracing the individual, especially those that did not fit the mold. Included in that last group are women priests. Each time a new Pope is elected, there is hope, and the current Pope, Francis, may leave a significant mark on the Church, but though he preaches a doctrine of inclusion - it is too broad and not specific enough to bring all factions together - yet. However, he did - just today - clarify that the question of married priests is open for discussion. Could women be next? Nah.

My vocation has been as a Celebration Minister: weddings, commitment ceremonies, celebration of life; blessings and similar things. I can't imagine me as a Pastor. The easiest way to fulfill my vocation was to join the on-line Universal Life Church-Monastery which has successfully gained legal acceptance in all 50 states as a wedding officiant. But something was missing.

My inquiries led me to The Ecumenical Catholic Church (ECC) and Archbishop Mark Shirilau in Riverside. Mark became a good friend of Bob's and mine and I started the process to become a deacon, or a priest. In early January 2014, Mark was visiting the Church in Italy and died of a heart attack; he was only 54 years old. Without a clear line of succession there has been a lot of politics and intrigue and the result is that the ECC bishop in Mexico is the new prelate. I chose not to continue with ECC and, instead, I joined the International Ecumenical Catholic Church (IECC) in Napa and Honolulu.

On Saturday, June 7th, I will be ordained a Deacon in the IECC as my first step towards priesthood in the future. As Deacon, I can perform all functions of the Church except the consecration of communion and the hearing of confession, so I will remain a Celebration Minister.