

Catch the Spirit News

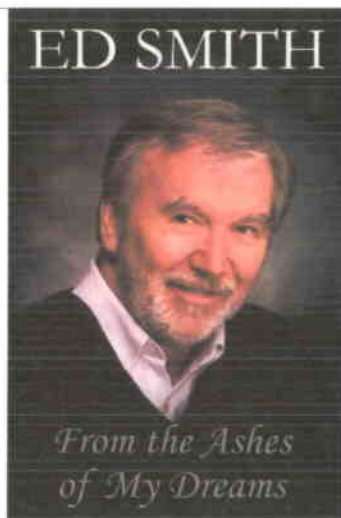
St. Mark's by the Lake

AWARD WINNING AUTHOR TO VISIT ST. MARK'S BY-THE-LAKE

Who knew that an internet blog could attract a well sought after speaker to a parish?

That is just what happened here. On his blog (which you can visit at www.revykevy.spaces.live.com), Kevin wrote a review of *From the Ashes of My Dreams*, a book that Ed Smith wrote to recount his 17-month ordeal in rehab centers, in both Newfoundland and Ontario, to get back to living.

Ed read Kevin's blog (reprinted in this Newsletter on page 7), and responded promptly with appreciation for what Kevin had written. He is in fact going to forward it to a couple of papers to be used as a Book Review.



Author Ed Smith pictured on the cover of his award winning book *From the Ashes of My dreams*

Ed and his wife Marion then followed that with an offer that this parish could not refuse. They will be making the long road trip to Southwestern Ontario to speak at an Interurban Conference on Spinal Cord Injury in Hamilton on Thursday, October 25. Ed and Marion have kindly offered to add time to their trip and come to Windsor on October 23 to be with us at St. Mark's by-the-Lake.

In preparation for his visit, the Markus Book Club will be hosting a book group on the following dates—

October 10 (Wednesday)

October 14 (Sunday)

October 18 (Thursday)

Then we will meet with Ed on October 23 at 7 PM. You may not be available for some or for that matter any of those dates – don't let that stop you. Let the church office know if you want the book and we will get it for you – cost is \$15.

This is truly a great gift that we have been given and we cannot encourage you strongly enough to come out and meet Ed and Marion Smith.

If you want to join the group or if you intend on coming to the October 23rd event please call the church office to advise—519 735 4921.

Fall 2007

Volume 4, Issue 3

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From the Rector's Pen



As many of you know, I was recently on a course that was focused on people like me who are in the midst of long pastorates. It was a good course and a great learning experience (and by the way—this experience was positive reinforcement of my discerning to stay at St. Mark's for quite some time).

In this course, we discussed and read a lot about vibrant, vital and healthy congregations. I was very proud at times thinking that we are indeed a parish that has much to be grateful for, given the many ways in which we are healthy. There is always room for growth and improvement, and our parish is no different. What follows is my reflection on **Marks of a Healthy Congregation** from Healthy Congregations by Peter Steinke. There are 18 Marks cited and I will do my best to offer some reflection on each one.

1. Healthy congregations accept differences (rather than deny). This is true for us to more of a degree than it is false. We have, more than ever, a diverse group of people in this parish, and we have more diversity in theology than we have had in the past. This of course in no way suggests that we are not called to be stretched even more, to accept even broader realities in who we are, as individuals and as a community of God.

2. Healthy congregations focus on their strengths (rather than weaknesses). I still remember how much we looked down at our bootstraps 8-9 years ago, instead of looking towards the skies. I am pleased now that more than ever we are focused on the good, vital and healthy things that are happening in this parish. Each and every day there seems to be more to be thankful for. We have good things to celebrate—great outreach—good missions, strong youth ministry, determined leadership, excellent liturgy and music, dedicated volunteers in every area, and so much

more. We as a people are far more focused on the positive than the negative.

3. Healthy congregations focus on mission (rather than "getting along", the past, survival, "the minister", or some other issue). This means that we identify with a purpose, and that purpose becomes the driving or motivating factor for a parish. We have some work to do here. We have more than ever taken up the Gospel call to be a people of the Resurrection and change lives. But from time to time, we still seem to get bogged down in conversations that can be a distraction to being the people of God.

4. Healthy congregations respond to anxiety and change (instead of reacting). This is a particular asset for the people of St. Mark's by-the-Lake. I can say with certainty that there are very few congregations who not just respond to anxiety and change, but in many cases are the agents of change and are out leading change. This is an important mark of a healthy congregation because the Gospel of Jesus is all about change. Any

"effective preaching is about afflicting the comfortable and comforting the afflicted."

congregation that cannot change will be dysfunctional and will, in my mind, eventually die.

5. Healthy congregations manage conflict (instead of denying it). This too is an important mark of being healthy. In any family, in any group, there is bound to be conflict. I am amused when people suggest that because we are the church, there should be no conflict—"after all, shouldn't we be more Christian?" What exactly does that mean? I would suggest that we should not be surprised at conflict in the church, but rather ask ourselves the question "How can we manage conflict in a Christian manner?" Running from church to church looking for a community free of conflict (denial) is about as pro-

ductive as roaming from tavern to tavern in hopes of finding just one that does not sell alcohol. "We love the atmosphere of those places, and yet each time we find one we like, someone takes out a beer and drinks it." Any grouping of humans is bound to have some conflict. The question remains—

6. Healthy congregations act flexibly and creatively (instead of rigidly). It is indeed a joy to be present as priest to a community that easily rolls with the punches. Our Parish Leadership Team is a strong and creative group that is prepared to take on new ideas and to take risks. We are talking about a parish that has *Hockey Jersey Sunday*, *Bring a Friend Sunday*, is prepared to do outreach in meaningful ways, and is a parish which, from time to time, has reacted quickly to a need when it has arisen.

7. In healthy congregations, leaders promote health through their presence and functioning (instead of techniques or skills). This could not be more accurate, in my opinion, for our community. The leaders (particularly myself) work hard at being present in every way possible. Even when we may not be the most skilled person(s) on the face of the planet, we look to be present, and search out opportunities. I

still remember a conversation at a clergy conference where a colleague of mine could not understand what the big deal was about him not being at a Bazaar. It occurred to me that he just didn't get it. When we assume leadership in the church we must be present for the big events, and that is as true for the lay leadership as it is for ordained leadership.

8. In healthy congregations, leaders challenge people (instead of comforting). Bob Gulliano, one of my professors at Huron College, used to say that "effective preaching is about afflicting the comfortable and comforting the afflicted." Too many congregations have too many comfortable pews.

(Continued on Page 5)

Outreach and Justice Committee Updates

Ladies and Gentlemen! The St. Mark's Outreach and Justice team proudly announces our upcoming Lenten Lecture Series! This year's topics include: Justice in the Marketplace, Socially Responsible Investing, Violence against Women, Justice Issues for Native Peoples, Habitat for Humanity, and one more that we are working on currently. The series dates and times will be announced as we approach Lent.

As a part of our Lenten experience, we are preparing a Lenten Reflections booklet. The booklet will contain poems, quotations and reflections that demonstrate God's presence in the world. We invite you to submit something. If you want to send us something, please write a brief description of what the piece means to you or how you were moved by it. Please also make sure we can credit the source properly. Our deadline for submissions will be December 1st, 2007.

It has been a busy summer for all of us here at St. Mark's! In between the vacations and relaxa-

tion, our congregation found time to give a helping hand to more than a few groups. Our "Underwear party" was a huge success! People are so very generous here. We were able to donate over two hundred pairs of underwear and a similar number of pairs of socks to the AIDS Committee of Windsor and the Homeless Coalition. Thanks to Kathy Wight's perseverance, Wal-Mart has generously offered to donate their leftover unsalable (opened package) underwear. They will be making regular ongoing donations. Kudos to Kathy and to Wal-Mart. In addition, the cash we received bought much needed personal items (soap, hand towels etc.) for Seniors in need.

All of the documents required for our paper sponsorships have been submitted. We are sponsoring, on paper, two families immigrating to Canada. The "paper" sponsorships are very simple. They involve no cash or in kind support but do offer our support and affirmation. We are standing up for these people — congratulations St.

Mark's!

Our "We care Committee" is preparing to offer assistance to people in our parish who just need a little boost. We are offering small kindnesses for those who need it; a ride to an appointment, a "we care" casserole for those difficult times, someone to read a book or newspaper or just to lend a helping hand. Let the church office know of any need and we will do our best. If you want to volunteer, please contact Valerie or any of the Justice Team members.

You may have noticed a difference at coffee hour, we are trying "Fair Trade Coffee" to see if everyone approves. The Fair Trade Coffee is purchased from suppliers who guarantee a fair price to the farmer for his goods. This is a tremendous service to farmers in the third world countries where most of our coffee originates. We receive a discount on this coffee because we are a church, but the price is still somewhat higher than our local markets. If you approve of the coffee and our reasons for using it, please let OJT know.

Calling All Knitters

If you are interested in knitting scarves for the Homeless Coalition contact Valerie in the Parish office.



No experience is necessary.



We can teach you how to straight knit a simple, warm scarf for someone who will desperately need it in the cold winter months.

For those experienced knitters, if you are unable to knit but would like to help others learn please join in on the fun.

Donations of yarn would be greatly appreciated.

Saying Thank-you to Geoff

Each year we are very fortunate to have the pastoral assistance of The Reverend Canon Geoff Dibbs. Geoff has been Honourary Assistant now for four years and has served each year from May until October.

Geoff's kind demeanour and sound theology and preaching make him a great fit here at St. Mark's. While Kevin was away on Summer vacation, Geoff assumed all responsibilities at the parish and was available to families in the midst of their pastoral needs. This past summer was a busy one and we are so thankful that Geoff was here.

On a week to week basis, from May until October,

Geoff takes a regular spot on a roster for liturgies, rotating with Kevin the preaching and officiating duties. Geoff is kept very busy.

Kevin is so grateful for Geoff's work and for his kind advice and attentiveness.

Sadly, Fall brings not just cooler temperatures but also thoughts of Geoff and Margaret's departure for the warm sun of Arizona for the winter months. As they will be leaving us after thanksgiving, this is an appropriate place to say thank you to them for all that they do for us while they are here.

You will find enclosed in your Newsletter a Thanksgiving envelope for



Geoff. It works the same way our Christmas Offering works for Kevin. It is our opportunity to offer him a thank you in the form of a gift.

Please use your envelope to offer your thanks. Geoff is not on the payroll at St. Mark's. His work is very much a labour of love

— Love for God and love for all of us.

Many Thanks

We would like to express our many thanks to everyone who helped with the Turkey dinner and Fall Bazaar. These events mean a great deal to the Church. They are always a great time of fun and fellowships.

Thanks to everyone involved!



Healthy Congregations

(Continued from Page 2)

That is to say that there is little concern for mission and discipleship and loads of energy to focus on having a “nice” community to belong to. I believe that in all the healthy ways we are challenged here.

We are challenged to take up our ministry—the ministry of our baptism and to do that which God has called us to.

9. **In healthy congregations, leaders provide immune capacities (instead of enabling disease processes).** This is all about healthy interaction and the healthy exchange of ideas. I think that in the past we have been guilty of have diseased processes of communicating and being church. As time goes on, we are becoming increasingly more adept at being healthy Christians.

10. **In healthy congregations, people respond graciously and truthfully (rather than judgmentally or secretly).** This is a challenge for any church congregation in North America because we have been conditioned to be the “polite” church. We are all about respectability, and this means that sometimes we would rather conceal the truth to make things look better. That is not to say that we should all become rude to each other. But being polite on the surface and judging each other secretly is really unhealthy. I feel strongly that this works in conjunction with # 9—this is all about being healthy with each other. We get better at this each and every day.

11. **In healthy congregations, people develop caring relationships (rather than willful transactions).** One of the great strengths of our growing community is the strong and lasting caring relationships that are developed in this holy place. Jesus of Nazareth implored the disciples to be present to each other, to care for each other, to feed each other, to comfort each other and to LOVE each other. At St. Mark’s by-the-Lake we are becoming increasingly more aware of those around us. We are about to launch a **We Care Team** which will assist in this mandate.

12. **In healthy congregations, people**

empower others (rather than dominate them or cure them). We cannot be attentive to the world around, to the people around us, if we see the need to make everyone like us. Too many churches look to cure the state that people are in rather than to be present to them and empower them to cure themselves. As a congregation we are moving day by day to a place where we are prepared to do what Jesus called us to do — simply go and be present with the wounded.

13. **Healthy congregations recognize the Creator’s interdependent design of life (rather than isolated, unrelated parts).** This follows from point “Mark” #12. We are all connected. God’s marvellous design is inter-related. When one of God’s children

Jesus of Nazareth implored the disciples to be present to each other, to care for each other, to feed each other, to comfort each other, and to LOVE each other. At St. Mark’s by-the-Lake we are becoming increasingly more aware of those around us.

in the Sudan is beaten because of hatred, we should pay attention as our common humanity is diminished. When one person goes unfed, our humanity is diminished.

14. **Healthy congregations practice stewardship gratefully and willingly (rather than begrudgingly).** We are in the midst of a lot of growth at St. Mark’s by-the-Lake. We have had a tremendous amount of generous and gracious stewardship. In this past year we have received a large commitment from the membership of this community to move forward with our *Raising the Roof* campaign. While we have not arrived at the place where we no longer have to be diligent and intentional about giving, it would be fair to say that the generous nature with which people give in this parish is tremendous. Those who are members/disciples here have always answered the call to take full ownership and responsibility for the mission of this parish and the cost of carrying out that mission.

15. **Healthy congregations combine money and the Christian life (rather than separate the one from the other).**

A follow-up of the previous point, this is a statement about the idea of stewardship. Phillip Gray says that “Christian stewardship is a way of living in which we recognize that everything belongs to God. All resources must be used for His glory and the common good. Solidarity is the fruit of stewardship.” Seeing this parish take that seriously is very gratifying.

16. **In healthy congregations, people share their lives (instead of each living for oneself).** Again, we can see that the commandment of Jesus that we LOVE each other is the guiding factor for congregations that are healthy.

17. **In healthy congregations, hospitality is offered to all (instead of favoritism for the few or like minded).** Welcoming communities are so important in the Christian context. We have all heard horror stories about people who visited a church for the first time only to be told that they were in someone’s pew. St. Mark’s is healthy in the area of hospitality and we are becoming more intentional about this as we work toward implementing a new Member Team, and adding a New Member Coordinator. Again and again, I hear from new members that this place is the “most inviting and welcoming place” they have ever been.

18. **In healthy congregations, beginning again is a way of life (instead of staying stuck).** This is really important! It is so frustrating to belong to a community which refuses to start over, to begin again. Take it from a man who has been there —being stuck is NO fun. It results in constant wheel spinning and frustration for all involved. A healthy congregation will stop spinning wheels, step back, reassess, and start fresh—perhaps even head in a different direction. Imagine that!

These *Marks of a Healthy Congregation* can serve for us as a reminder of who we need to be as community. They can assist us in growing toward the ultimate goal of transforming as many lives as possible, by opening our doors to as many people as we can, and continuing to be the disciples that God has called us to be.

Warden's Report

Fall is upon us and we continue to be blessed with activity, with an abundance of ministers and ministries in our midst. We have just enjoyed our annual Turkey dinner which saw over 500 meals served, and nearly \$5,000 raised. More than a fundraiser this is a great community event where we show our presence within the community. We wish to thank the "team" of people who work so very hard to see that event happen.

On a sadder note we say farewell to our friends Geoff and Margaret Dibbs as they leave us to head back to the warm surroundings of Arizona for the Winter. We are so lucky to have them a part of our Parish family. Geoff is so much more than an honorary assistant or occasional fill in. His participation in this Parish extends far beyond what happens Sunday morning. It is a great relief to know we are in such capable hands particularly while Kevin is away on vacation. We will miss Geoff and Margaret this winter and look forward to their return in the Spring.

We thank Jane for all the hard work

she has done with and for the youth in our Parish. We have an exciting Church school program under way, and a good group of slightly older youth who are always eager to meet. We had a very good contingent from St Mark's at Huron Church Camp over the past summer, and by all accounts a good time was had by all. We will over the next year likely hear about some exciting plans for improvements to the Camp which is in need of a facelift.

The Choir has grown not only in numbers but in talent, and we are grateful for the very capable leadership of Andrea. We look forward to more anthems, and interesting music to come.

One of the ministries that has seen great growth is our Outreach for Justice Team. They have been able to connect us with many groups who are desperately in need of assistance, and as usual St Mark's by-the-Lake has responded.

We are well on our way with the Raising the Roof Campaign. We had a very successful kick off and have raised cash or pledges to date in the amount of \$350,000. We still have a

way to go, and encourage any who have not yet made a commitment or who may have questions about the program, or plans, to contact one of the Wardens or the Treasurer. We have made representation to the Grants and Loans Committee for the Diocese of Huron, as well as the Administration and Finance Committee regarding the nature of their partnership with us on this very important initiative that has resulted from our growth and potential future growth. We hope to see a positive outcome from this once the diocesan council meets later in October. We of course also look forward to our Annual Steak BBQ and Auction whose proceeds also benefit the Raising the Roof Campaign. More information will be out very soon on that.

Finally we continue to give thanks for Kevin and the vitality and energy he brings to every aspect of our collective ministries. While many hands make light work, success requires strong leadership and we certainly have that.

Scott Shields
For the Wardens

Financial report

At Vestry in February, we approved the "Raising the Roof" capital campaign. Pledges and donations have gone well.

Unfortunately, we are not so healthy from an operating budget standpoint. We planned and approved an increase of 12% on regular offerings. To the end of September, we are just slightly ahead of the same period last year. Based on this trend, we face a shortfall of \$20,000. Please take time to reflect on your planned giving for the remainder of the year and contact Valerie or myself to update your Pre-Authorized Payment amounts.

**Regards,
Mark Charlton
Treasurer**



A Book Review – From the Ashes of My Dreams

September 24

Ed Smith and Padre Pio

WRITTEN SEPTEMBER 23

In the Roman Calendar, today is the commemoration of Padre Pio. A Saint who was canonized by John Paul II, Padre Pio died in 1968. He was a man of great witness and discipleship. Padre Pio became a very sought after priest, for spiritual direction, confession and reconciliation, after he developed the stigmata (the wounds of Jesus) on the palms of the hands. He believed that people are called to engage in their faith. He said, "Be good Christians, or your journey will serve you no good purpose. Only by good example can you change the world." In proclaiming his faith Padre Pio did not hide his woundedness. He revealed both his spiritual and physical wounds. He did not hide the fact that he was a reflection of Christ's woundedness.

It seems to me that we are called to be disciples and to bear witness. Let me share with you a little about someone whom I believe has been bearing witness and has been living discipleship.

I have been reading a few books. I just finished a book entitled "From the Ashes of My Dreams," by Ed Smith. Ed is the author whose article regarding ministering to children, I posted on this blog in August. In this book Ed recounts his struggle to recover from a terrible motor vehicle accident that left him paralyzed from the chest down (or as he reminds us in the book – the nipple line.) I have long admired Ed Smith's writing and I have long admired his humour and good wit. I have been inspired by his regular column in The Telegram to do good and to look for good in others. In Ed's vocation there is integrity,

and it is refreshing. Today I have a new respect for Ed Smith. This book is an honest (and sometimes difficult to read) journey of a man who has to face unbelievable struggle to get back to living. I gained a new perspective on this man, his tremendous family and his faith. Ed recounts his struggle with faith and with God. It is increasingly rare that we get to hear that kind of honesty about a faith journey. The fundamentalists have hijacked the word Christian, and the media love to report what "Christians" are thinking. I wrote a couple of weeks ago about the media's fixation on Mother Teresa's doubts. Yet I contend that it was her doubts and her courage to be honest about them that made her such a profound and powerful witness. Ed Smith is another good reflection of this. Reading this book will make you laugh and will make you cry. In the midst of all of that emotion is a real story of faith and courage. Ed Smith soldiers on in life despite the challenges and is a living witness to the human's spiritual capacity to rise above all challenges. I found myself saying "yes" out loud when I read his recounting with frustration the times that people used expressions like – "It's all a part of God's Plan." Or "God never gives you more than you can bear." Or "It's all a part of God's will." He is direct about the fact that miracles are an elusive reality and that he has uncertain feelings about what they mean, but he is very clear about what they do not mean in his circumstance. This was very heartening for me. I, like so many, have struggled with those glib things that people say in an attempt to be helpful. I personally refuse to accept a God who wills that a person like Ed Smith should be restricted to a chair for life, or for that matter that children should die from unbelievably rare conditions, people

should starve, cancers run free and wars increase from day to day. No – God is not that cruel. The God that I know weeps at all of those scenarios and the many more situations of suffering that are so devastating in this world. It was refreshing to read the words of a person who living through his own hell was confronted with debunking those expressions for what they are – an attempt by those who love us to say something kind. I just found his whole story very inspiring. In every aspect this book really brings hope to the reader. I would recommend it to everyone but most especially to those who are facing what feel like impossible odds.

Having read Ed's writing for years I feel comfortable saying that "by [his] good example [he is] changing the world." Thanks Ed for your ongoing witness to Light, Love, Peace and Perseverance. I know that in your honest struggle on your faith journey, there is a witness to all of us who journey on this road as well. In proclaiming his faith Ed Smith did not hide his woundedness. He revealed both his spiritual and physical wounds. He did not hide the fact that he was a reflection of Christ's woundedness.

I believe that in one's brokenness there is a reflection of the profound light of God. That Light is expressed well in the life of The Padre Pios and Ed Smiths of this world.

Church School Events/Updates

Off the Grid

On Oct. 20-21, the youth will be participating in a deanery fundraising event for Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. (PWRDF).

"Off the Grid" is a program which educates the youth on energy consumption and waste and challenges them to go 'off the grid'- to get back to nature. Various games and discussions will help us all discover what we can do to help be kinder to our earth and to recognize the challenges that others face across the globe. We'll even be tenting in St. Mark's backyard!

The Youth will be accepting sponsors for the next two Sundays during coffee hour. All fundraising will be directed to PWRDF. Make sure to check out PWRDF's youth web site: www.justgeneration.ca for more exciting ideas and happenings with other Anglican youth in Canada.



PRIMATE'S WORLD RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

the official relief and development agency of the anglican church of canada

Vacation Bible School

In August, 36 children from St. Mark's BTL and St. David's participated in our Vacation Bible School- "Avalanche Ranch" - A Wild Ride through God's Word! The children explored the stories of Joshua and the challenges that the Israelites faced after wandering in the desert for 40 years. They even 'tumbled down' Jericho's walls (with the assistance of the water slide!!).

Many thanks to ALL of our volunteers who gave their time, energy and talents to make this event possible!! St. Mark's is very blessed to have such a dedicated team of volunteers and the children and I appreciate all you do for the children's and youth ministry. WA-HOO!!!



Church School Events/Updates

This Fall, the children have been learning about the story of the Ten Lepers. Lepers were treated as outcasts in society and were not allowed to live within the communities. They needed to cover their faces and sores and shout 'unclean' whenever they were approached. One day, ten lepers came to Jesus and asked to be healed. He sent them to their priests and they rejoiced because they were healed. However, only one, a Samaritan, came back to thank Jesus. He was healed, not only physically, but spiritually.



This week, the children made 'sores' out of fruit roll-ups and covered their bodies! As Jesus healed them, they made the roll-ups disappear!

This story is not only about healing, but about the importance of being thankful. In our world today, we have so many blessings and so much to be thankful for, but sometimes we forget to say thanks. This story is a gentle reminder for the children to be thankful for their many blessings!



Visit St. Marks on the Web

If you are on line at home you may wish to visit St. Mark's on the World Wide Web. You can Visit our parish web Page at

www.stmarkschurch.net

You might want to Visit Kevin's Blog to keep up with things. You can see it at

www.revykevyspaces.live.com



Women priests to match males by 2025

Telegraph," August 12, 2007 London, England

This article from the Telegraph shows the changing face of the church. While we began ordaining women in 1976, England did not do so until 1992. Yet things are changing quickly in England, but as this article by Jonathan Wynne-Jones, "Telegraph," August 12, 2007 shows there are still injustices for women clergy. But as in the case in North America, women are on pace out out-number men in priesthood.

When Geraldine Granger be-

came the female vicar of television's fictional Dibley, her congregation greeted her arrival with a combination of surprise



and fury.

Within 20 years, however, most villagers in England will be more surprised if their new vicar is not a woman.

According to a report due for release this autumn, there will be as many female priests as male by 2025. The study, entitled Religious Trends, concludes that without the rapid growth in the number of women being ordained - as many women will be becoming priests as men by the end of the decade - some parishes would be forced to close.

The situation is very different from that in 1994 when The Vicar of Dibley, the BBC comedy starring Dawn French, first aired.

Then, a tiny proportion of priests were women. Even seven years ago, just 10 per cent of the

Church's 9,500 clergy were women.

Some dioceses, many of them in rural locations, already report a higher number of women being ordained than men.

The report estimates that by 2016 one in every three priests will be a woman. This year, 47 per cent of new priests have been female. In the Bath and Wells diocese, 13 out of the 16 priests ordained have been women. In Warkfield, it is 10 out of 14.

The Rev Charlie Allen, 27, a vicar in the village of Portchester, Hampshire, said that her decision to be ordained had been met with some surprise, but that being a woman priest had become much easier.

"It is not the obvious job that parents expect their daughters to do," she said.

"The traditional stereotype of the middle-aged male priest is part of the Church's historical legacy, so when I started five years ago people would be surprised to see a young female priest. That is no longer the case. It has ceased to be a great unknown or something for people to fear or be worried about."

Miss Allen, the parish's first female incumbent, said some people still saw women priests as

"slightly unusual", but predicted that in 10 years sex would no longer be an issue.

According to the study by Christian Research, an independent organization that analyses Church statistics, between 1990 and 2015 the number of women priests will have doubled to 2,200 while the number of male clergy will have almost halved to just over 4,500.

Since women were allowed to become priests in 1992, just two of the Church's 43 cathedrals have appointed a female dean.

The Ven Chris Lowson, director of ministry for the Archbishops' Council, the Church's executive body, said: "For the Church to be healthy and reflect its congregations it needs to be balanced. For most of its history it has been an inhospitable place for women's ministry so it has taken a while for the role models to have an impact. They are now catching up and are taking their place. If the Church hadn't ordained women we'd be in substantial difficulty now."

Despite the rapid growth in the number of women clergy, concerns that females are failing to make the higher echelons of the Church remain.

Since women were allowed to become priests in 1992, just two

of the Church's 43 cathedrals have appointed a female dean. The Church is also struggling to find a way of permitting women to become bishops without antagonizing traditionalists and evangelicals. Around 400 clergy left the Church of England after the decision to allow the ordination of women, with many converting to Catholicism.

The Rev Alison Fulford, curate at St Margaret's Old Catton, Norwich, said a "glass ceiling" existed for female clergy.

"It's frustrating, but not surprising, that there aren't more women in senior positions. Despite there being much greater balance among the clergy, it is taking time for people to get used to us."

A report funded by the Economic and Social Research Council found that women priests earned less on average than their male colleagues, largely because women tended to go into voluntary, "non-stipendiary" posts or to serve as unpaid "ordained local-ministers".

Up Coming Events

Sesquicentennial Diocesan Service

The Diocese of Huron is celebrating its 150th year anniversary of the creation of the Diocese, and the election of its first Bishop in 1857.

A variety of events are scheduled through the year, culminating in a Diocesan wide Worship service in the John Labatt Centre in London at 2 pm Sunday, October 28th.

Please call the Church Office 519-735-4921 to arrange for your ticket(s)!



Bring a Friend Sunday

Sunday, November 4,
2007



Fall Bazaar

Saturday November 17, 2007

Each year this is a great place to have fun, shop for Christmas and to just spend good time with folks from the parish and around the neighborhood.

Between now and the Fall Bazaar, the PAC will meet to make crafts for the Bazaar. Craft ideas and donations are always welcome. Please come out and help in any way you can.



Steak BBQ and Auction

Friday, November 23, 2007



Please watch the bulletin for
more details
or call the Church Office.

