

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Roman Catholic Womenpriests to be ordained in St. Louis**

Release date: October 15, 2007

On November 11, 2007, two women will be ordained as Roman Catholic priests in a historic ceremony in the city of Saint Louis. Rose Marie Dunn Hudson of Festus, Missouri, and Elsie Hainz McGrath of Saint Louis, will be ordained by Bishop Patricia Fresen of Germany.

The ordination is part of the Roman Catholic Womenpriests (RCWP) movement. This movement is building a renewed model of priesthood for a renewed Church, so as to achieve full equality of women and men and live with inclusiveness, respect and justice for all in a community of open and affirming equals.

Rose Marie and Elsie have both earned graduate degrees in theology and ministry, and have been engaged in active ministry for many years. Rose Marie is a retired school teacher, a wife, mother and grandmother. Elsie is a retired editor, a widow, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Prophetic obedience, a hallmark of the RCWP movement, led them to make this life-altering commitment and “walk the talk” of clerical reform in the Roman Catholic Church. As priests, they will continue to exercise a variety of volunteer ministries.

They will also co-pastor the Thérèse of Divine Peace Inclusive Community on Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. beginning December 1, 2007. The Thérèse community will meet in Hope Chapel at the First Unitarian Church of Saint Louis, 5007 Waterman Avenue.

The RCWP movement began in 2002, when seven women (“The Danube Seven”) were ordained by Bishop Romulo Braschi of Argentina. Bishop Braschi did so by the power vested in Roman Catholic bishops who are in full apostolic succession from Jesus Christ. The following year, several male bishops, in full communion with the pope, ordained two of those women as bishops. These same male bishops, along with the two women bishops, ordained Patricia Fresen a bishop in 2004.

The ceremony will take place at 3 o’clock in the afternoon at Central Reform Congregation (CRC), a Reform Jewish congregation in Saint Louis. CRC’s Rabbi Susan Talve says that the congregation’s Board of Directors agreed to host the ordination because “our building was built to be a Sukkat Shalom – a shelter of peace – for those who need it.”

“It is an honor to celebrate these historic ordinations at CRC,” Bridget Mary Meehan, national spokesperson for RCWP, stated. “Catholic womenpriests work with all faith traditions for peace, justice, and equality in our world.”

Please see page 2 for Media Opportunities.

## **Media Opportunities:**

Media are welcome to cover the ordination ceremony on Sunday, November 11. The following media opportunities are available:

- 2:15 pm: Media briefing with representatives of Roman Catholic Womenpriests and the Women's Ordination Conference
- 2:45 pm: Ordination Ceremony (Ceremony begins promptly at 3:00 pm. All media must be in the building by 2:45 pm.)

Out of respect for the religious nature of this ceremony, we ask that media representatives observe the following:

- Both still cameras and video cameras are welcome.
- A section will be roped off in the sanctuary for media. We ask that media remain in this section and not move up toward the ceremony. A back door will be available for press representatives needing to leave early.
- We ask that the media obtain permission from any guests attending the ceremony and reception before publishing their names or images, with the exception of non-identifying shots from behind.

## **For more information, please contact:**

Rose Marie and Elsie may be contacted at [divine\\_shalom2007@yahoo.com](mailto:divine_shalom2007@yahoo.com), or call 636-208-5598 for Rose Marie or 314-477-6089 for Elsie.

Bridget Mary Meehan, media representative for RCWP-USA, may be contacted at [sofiabmm@aol.com](mailto:sofiabmm@aol.com), or call 703-671-6712 or 703-283-2929.

Aisha Taylor, executive director for the Women's Ordination Conference, may be contacted at [ataylor@womensordination.org](mailto:ataylor@womensordination.org), or call 703-352-1006 or 202-422-2235.

**A press packet can be obtained after November 1 by contacting any of the above people.**

Visit us online at [www.romancatholicwomenpriests.org](http://www.romancatholicwomenpriests.org).