

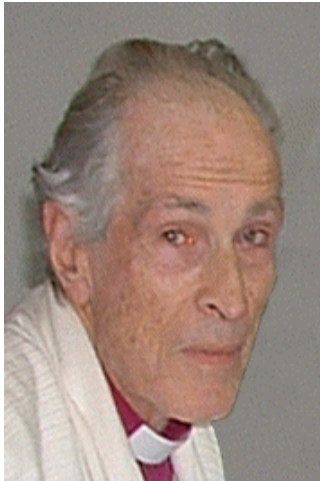


THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE USA

# NEWS

SUMMER 2005

## *IN MEMORIAM*



The Rt. Rev. Tom Degenars past away quietly in Arnhem on June 14, 2005 at 1:55 local time, after suffering briefly from pneumonia. He was born on October 10, 1921, and belonged to that first generation of Liberal Catholics workers who contributed to the development of our Church. A world traveler, he helped many congregation to come to life, not only in his country, but as far as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Congo



He was consecrated as a Liberal Catholic bishop on Aug. 8, 1982, in Hjørring, Denmark by the Bishops: Børge SØGAARD, Lennart Ivar Victor SÖDERSTRÖM, Aumo Kalervo ARTEMAA, Adriaan Herman van BRAKEL, Willy de RIJK, Ludovicus Carol Elise van HOOGENHUYZE, and Rudolf Leopold HAMMER, as Auxiliary Bishop for Denmark, Norway, and Iceland.

He became Bishop Commissary for the Philippines on 18 May 1984 and Regionary Bishop for Denmark, Norway and Iceland on 12 Apr. 1984. He retired as such in 1997, and came out of retirement to become the first Presiding Bishop of our movement, on 9 Jun. 2003.

Bp. Degenars was an early supporter of the admission of women into the Holy Orders, and promoted the idea among the members of the General Episcopal Synod. It is only when the last hope for the ordination of women was lost that he resigned as a member of that Synod and became one of the founders of our movement.

His last public appearance was at the double Episcopal consecration in Amsterdam on May 16, when he laid hands on the new bishops: the Rt. Revs. Peter Olaf BAAIJ and Anders Evert SUNDIEN.

*BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES on Bp. Tom Degenaaars,  
Compiled by Christina Covelli.*

Our beloved +Tom Degenaaars was born in 1921. At the time of his passing on 14 June 2005, +Tom was Presiding Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church. A priest since October 1955, +Tom served as Vicar General for Norway (1967-71) and Indonesia (1978-79). He joined the Liberal Catholic Institute of Study conference at Ojai in 1981 and ten years later became its International Director.

+Tom was consecrated bishop on 8 August 1982 and served as Regionary Bishop for Norway, Denmark, and Iceland from 1984 to 1996. He became Presiding Bishop on 9 June 2003.

Bishop Tom was a champion of equal roles and rights for women in Christian churches. He also wanted to build bridges between people of various beliefs. He sometimes referred to himself as a *christosophist* (a word used in Sweden some 50 years ago). An avid linguist, +Tom celebrated the Mass in eight different languages.

Tom joined the Theosophical Society in 1949. He was the editor of the TS youth magazine *Enthousiasme/Lotos* from 1951 to 1971. He became a Knight Errant in the Order of the Round Table in 1971. In Arusha (Tanzania 1976), Tom established Theosophical Lodge Meru. The following year, he officiated as priest in the blessing of the new 14-story Management Institute (on a sunny March Sunday, as he liked to recall). Tom served as General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Norway from 1981 to 1984. Tom was also a member of Co-Freemasonic Lodge Odin in Copenhagen from 1993 until 1997.

As a member of the Royal East Indian Army, Tom became one of its youngest corporals in Nov. 1939. He was captured by the Japanese during world war II, and spent four years in numerous hard labour POW camps. In spite of this hardship, Tom was able to forgive his tormentors. One bright spot during this time was that he was able to engage in various scouting activities, having been a Sea Scout and Rover since 1937.

+Tom graduated from Delft University (M Sc.) in 1951. He began his career as a railway engineer in northern Norway. He and his family lived in a log cabin near the Arctic Circle before moving to the Oslo area in Nov. 1957. There he worked on the Oslo Central Station project until his retirement in Nov. 1988.

From 1972 to 1979, Tom served as a United Nations management adviser in eastern Africa and Indonesia, lecturing, conducting seminars, and publishing manuals. Until 1987, he was a consultant for a container terminal network in Zaire and other areas of southern Africa. It is during these years that he helped with the establishment of the Liberal Catholic Church in Zaire.

After the passing of Ingeborg, Tom moved to Sweden in 1992 and later to the Netherlands in 1997. There he became re-acquainted with Elisabeth Janssen, whom he had met some fifty years earlier. Elisabeth became his loving helper and friend.

Tom is survived by Elisabeth, his brother, his four children and grandchildren. You could say 'good-bye' or 'bon voyage' to Tom in the different languages he knew.

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## ***SOME THOUGHT ON MY EXPERIENCES AS A DEACON*** ***by Joan Warnon***

**I**t was for me a very special Easter Season. For the first time, I was able to function as a deacon during the Holy week services and at the Easter Sunday Mass.

I have been a member of the Liberal Catholic Church since my birth, as my Father was a priest and my mother the organist at the St. Alban Parish in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, where we lived for more than 20 years. During my student's years, I often attended the services at Saint Michael's and All Angels, in Naarden, and met there with many well known priests and bishops: from the Rev Jaap Kouwe Sr. to bishop Augustus Goetmakers, bishop Frans Brandt Sr, and later bishop Marijn, his son, and many visiting priests and clergy as well, who made the pilgrimage to this Church, established by our founding Bishop, James Ingall Wedgwood.

From my childhood time, I remember the study of my Father, where a small altar was installed behind a curtain in a kind of alcove, and where, especially in wartime, he would celebrate and give healing services.

At that time, there was no question for girls to work at the altar, though both my brothers did and became priests. Later, I became very interested in the talks and studies by the Rev. Prof. Van der Stok. who stressed the importance of the active role of the congregation. I became pretty much reconciled with the idea of working as a member.

During the ordination and later the consecration of Maurice, I felt very much part of the ceremonies. The same happened when my three sons went through the Holy Orders and when two of them became Priests.

It was only when I felt that Maurice started to need help, and also because of his frailer health, that I decided I would begin to serve and to help him when necessary. So, when the possibility opened for women to receive the Holy Orders, I wanted very much to be able to work close to him.

This Easter week, as a deacon, I was offered the marvelous opportunity to participate in the ceremonies on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday morning. Thursday evening, I was allowed to perform the Solemn Benediction, a first for me as Deacon, because its celebration by a deacon had been approved by our General Episcopal Synod in 2004.

It was an awesome experience and in a way I felt as if I just picked up a very ancient pattern, long forgotten, but now brought back from oblivion.

Then, on Good Friday, I carried the cross back to the altar with the ancient Trisagion formula of worship: “Holy art Thou, O God!”. It all felt so right and in a way very familiar, and it filled me with a sense of marvel and wonder. Then, on Saturday, I carried the triple light, lit the Pascal Candle and read the Gospel. of John.

Sunday finally, my son offered to celebrate as the subdeacon, so I could live the deacon experience in a “three persons service.”

Amazingly, I didn’t feel that I was working with my husband and my son, but rather that we were “brothers” working for the same Lord. It was very tempting to do this work by imagining that I was a male priest, especially as ancient memory arose in me of having done this long before. Also, I had seen it celebrated for so many years by people I loved and were very close too, that it would have been easy to imitate them and put myself in their place. But I resisted that desire, as I felt that as a deacon I also represented the more feminine aspect of the Priest. Suddenly, I felt the wondrous and tender influence of our Lady, the Great Mother, pulsing through me. I was able to perform the rest of the service in that energy, also during the distribution of the Holy Communion when I could share the power of my new function with the members of our community. It was a beautiful and holy experience, so difficult to put into words, but not less moving and sacred.

I want to share this experience with you, thinking of the future, knowing that not many, if any, women have had this experience yet. I also realize that there is still hesitation in our Church, for men and for women alike. I just want to confirm that my experience is the way of the Church for the future. I know that it is and feels right. For those who have known my father, the Rev. Hans Poortman, it may not be amazing that I felt him very close, that he was helping; and other friends members of clergy I have known and admired in their work, did as well. And it felt as if the Mother and Her Holy Son were smiling at me, and were very interested in what was taking place.

But as for me I felt absolutely at the right place. I was “the right person at the right place” and at that moment, I wasn’t feeling as a woman; I was just a human being sharing the Love and Power of Christ through the Holy Sacraments, as it has been done for 2000 years.

I hope in a not too distant future to reach Priesthood and be able to help in the Work of Our Lord Christ with all my soul and mind and heart, even if my age and my knees give me a hard time to keep up with the kneeling and genuflecting!

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## ***NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH. HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE....***

### ***The Province of Belgium***

The revival of the Congregation of Our Lady in Antwerp has made some progress. On Trinity Sunday, two members, Christian van de Kerkhove en Yves Vandenberg, have been admitted to our Church, by the Sacrament of Confirmation. Mr. Eddy Doms, who represents our Church in Antwerp has been ordained as Acolyte and has manifested his desire to enter in the Major Orders. The Rev. Ronald Engelse, the priest-in-charge of the new congregation was present for the occasions.

Ariane Sauvenier has been ordained up to Exorcist. After her wedding, she has moved to Brussels where she has received a scholarship to work at the National Observatory in Uccle. Ariane has recently obtained a Master degree in Mathematics, with a specialty in Astronomy.

Sylvie Hermant-Varda en Line Destemberg have been ordained to the Subdiaconate on Trinity Sunday in the Chapel of Our Lady of peace in Natoye. Church of St. Francis Rotterdam (the Netherlands) . He and his wife Ietske travel once a month to Antwerp for the Theosophical Society. Although his offer is promising, there is still much work to do to achieve the celebration of regular services. The most difficult part of the project is to find suitable premises.

### ***The Province of Cameroon***

A group of former Roman Catholics in Cameroon has contacted our movement about one year ago, after reading the pages of our web site on the internet, with the request to join. This very large community is ministered by one single priest, the Rev. Laurent. An extensive correspondence followed, during which the teachings of our movement, our Canon Law and our Liturgy were discussed. In April 2005, after consulting his congregation, the Rev. Laurent signed the Oath of Canonical Obedience. The General Episcopal Synod, during its May 15, 2005 session, created the new Liberal Catholic Province of Cameroon and appointed the Rt. Rev. Maurice Warnon as its Bishop Commissary, as French is the national language in Cameroon. Bp. Warnon has appointed the Rev. Laurent as the Vicar General of the new Province on May 22, 2005 and is planning to visit Cameroon next Fall.

### ***The Province of Canada***

The members of the Canadian Province have held their annual General Assembly on June 4, 2005. They have elected their new national board. A new Provincial Constitution has been presented for approval. The update was needed as our General Episcopal Synod has approved the creation of two dioceses in the Canadian Province, an English speaking and a French speaking dioceses, to accommodate with the cultural and linguistic realities of Canada.

After an absence of six month, Mr. Reynoud Veerman has returned to Montreal and re-opened the Chapel of St. Theresa. He was ordained to the subdiaconate by the

Rt. Rev. Maurice Warnon, Regionary Bishop, in the recently built Church of Our Lady, in Magog, Quebec, on June 19, 2005. The same day, Mrs Diane Tremblay has been ordained up to the Order of Acolyte.

### *The Province of the Netherlands*

The announced double Episcopal Consecration of the Revs. Peter Baaij and Evert Sundien has taken place as scheduled on May 16, 2005 in the Church of Saint Gabriel in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in the presence of hundreds of members from many countries. The bishops presents were: the Rt. Rev. Tom Degenars, Presiding Bishop; the Consecrator, the Rt. Rev. Frank den Outer, and the Bishops Maurice Warnon, Senior Assistant, and Sten-Bertil Jakobson, Junior assistant. Also presents was Bp. Kai Jørgensen, the Regionary bishop for Denmark.



The church of St Gabriel was particularly well suited for a double Episcopal consecrations as it has two full size side altars. At the gospel side is the altar of Our Lady, and at the epistle side, the altar of Saint Gabriel.

The Church of Saint Gabriel was built specifically for the celebration of the Liberal Catholic Rite, and is known for its painted windows. The window above the main altar is a five pointed star which has been used several times as illustration for the Liberal Catholic magazine.

Bishop Peter who, many years was the Rector of this church, choose to celebrate at the altar of Our Lady.





Bishop Evert worked at the altar of Saint Gabriel. The design of window behind that altar is obviously inspired by the Emerald Table, the famous hermetic text: *“That which is below is like that which is above, and that which is above is like that which is below, to accomplish the miracles of One Thing”*.

For many years, a graphic rendering of this window was used as a cover for several European Liberal Catholic magazines. Today it is still used by **Caritas**, the magazine of the Belgian Province, and **Vision**, of the Canadian Province.

*“ I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God. I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news.”*  
(Luke 1:19)

Every seat in the church was occupied for the ceremony. There could be no doubt that the entire congregation was in full support of the election and the consecration of the two new bishops, and of the movement they represent within the Liberal Catholic Church.

A reception in honor of the new bishops was organized in the nearby school. Congratulations were presented first by the representatives of the Dutch and Swedish congregations, and later by representatives from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, Germany, and the United States of America.

### *The Province of Sweden.*

Marianne Andersson-Söderström and Carina Carlström have both received the Order of subdeacon from Bp. Sten-Bertil Jakobson, the Regionary for Sweden.

In a letter to a friend, Carina said:

*My friends have asked me how I felt at the time, and honestly I don't know what to reply. It was grand, of course, and truly humbling... but it will take a while before I realize all the way into the depths of my heart that it is really true”*



## *The Province of the United States of America.*



The consecration of the Rev. Michael J. Warnon as Auxiliary Bishop for Canada and the northeast of the United States is scheduled take place on Saturday July 23, 2005 at 10:00 a.m., in the United Church of Christ, in Middletown, New York, USA. (Picture of the left).

At this point of time, five bishops will attend this important event. An informal reception will be held in the hall of the church after the ceremony. Please let the organizers know if you plan to attend at <[lcc.usa@kingsgarden.org](mailto:lcc.usa@kingsgarden.org)>. Maps and directions can be found on our web site <http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch.org> by clicking on the icon: COMING EVENTS.

## *Church of Saint Francis, Minneapolis, MN.*

Sunday Eucharist services and Our Lady's Rosary of the Seven Rays on the first Saturday of each month continue to have been held. The traditional Holy Week services were all conducted with a good Easter turnout.

On Sunday, April 24, Bishop Maurice, assisted by Rev. Curney as master of ceremonies, Rev. Wallace as thurifer, and Rev. Joan as crosier bearer, confirmed server Shawn Thorson; raised Cleric Jodi Christenson to Doorkeeper and Reader; raised Reader Judie Cilcain to Exorcist, Acolyte, and Subdeacon; and raised Subdeacon Lee Dunn to Deacon. The congregation held a vegetarian potluck following the service, and then Bishop Maurice held a congregational meeting and clergy training for the assembly. We are once again grateful to Bishop Maurice and Rev. Joan for their inspiring presences and invaluable assistance as we work to strengthen the church in the Twin Cities area.

Our member Florence Cody experienced yet another tragedy when her youngest son Joseph died unexpectedly on April 3. Saint Francis sent a floral bouquet for the memorial service.

Our quarterly vegetarian potluck was held on May 22. With Rev. Curney out of town on the Memorial Day weekend, Rev. Lee Dunn conducted our first beautiful Mass of the Presanctified, and all attendees said they preferred that to Prime. Judie had a letter to the editor published in Lavender Magazine, a bi-weekly directed to the GLBT community. Wearers of the Rainbow Sashes were denied communion at the Saint Paul Cathedral, and Judie invited them to attend Saint Francis where communion is open to all. Finally, we are delighted that Cleric Lil Brenny is regaining her health and has returned to Saint Francis after a lengthy illness. Welcome back, Lil!

### ***Mission of the Holy Sophia, Stockholm, WI.***

Our biggest news, of course, is Bishop Maurice and Rev. Joan Warnon's visit over the weekend of April 21–25. On Friday, April 22, Lee Dunn, along with Judie Cilcain, drove the Warnons to Stockholm, Wisconsin, in preparation for the consecration of Rev. Wallace Zick's beautiful new Church of Saint Sophia the following morning. Rev. Richard Curney, his wife Paula Yankee, and son Casey Curney arrived on Saturday morning for this joyous event.



Rev. Richard and Mr. Dunn sat in choir, and Judie served as thurifer for the consecration and Eucharist that followed. Cleric Jodi Christenson and members Mary Shoquist and Sandy Johnson also drove to Stockholm on Saturday morning to join in the event. Saint Francis donated a magnolia and a few other trees to commemorate Saint Sophia's consecration. Following the ceremonies, our members participated in the reception that followed and also joined in a luncheon before heading back to the Twin Cities.

### ***Church of Our Lady, Mother of the World, Rock Tavern, NY.***

All the services of the Holy Week have been celebrated in our Chapel. Of particular importance was the consecration of the Holy Oils destined to the ministry of our Congregations in Belgium, Canada, United Kingdom and United States of America.

Buck Lawrence, who has served at the altar for many years, has accepted to receive the sub-diaconate, as a preparation for the Major Orders. Buck became a members of the LCC in the Parish of St. John of the Cross in New Orleans. He was admitted by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Robert S. McGinnis, Jr. When he moved to the northeast with his family, he became an active member of our congregation and has regularly and faithfully served at the altar. His ordination took place on April 10, 2005, the second Sunday after Easter.

### ***ALBANUS Press.***

In addition to the new edition of the General Constitution and Code of Canons of the Liberal Catholic Church, reflecting the decisions of the Meeting of the 2004 General Episcopal Synod, several new works have been added to the catalog. For the moment, the publication of liturgical booklets for the congregations has received

priority. The success obtained by the publication of Bp. Cooper's *THE CEREMONIES OF THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC RITE* (Blue Book) on CD-rom a few years ago has encouraged us to continue to publish other works on this media. The major advantages of this publication technique are its very low cost, its small storage requirements, and its durability. Are now available in English: Bp. Leadbeater's *THE SCIENCE OF THE SACRAMENTS* and Bp. Wedgwood, *THE LARGER MEANING OF RELIGION*. Other classical Liberal Catholic works are scheduled to appear next season.

Congregations and members of the LCC may request the opening of a customer account, and obtain a special discount. ALBANUS accepts VISA and MasterCard, sorry other cards cannot be used. Our publishing house is owned by the Belgian Province of the LCC since 1988 and the volunteers who operate it are not compensated.

Orders can be placed at: <http://kingsgarden.org/ALBANUS>

### *The Liberal Catholic Church in cyberspace.*

#### ERRATA

The domain names providing access to our international LCC web site in French, published in the last issue contained an error. The correct URL is: <http://EgliseCatholiqueLiberale.org> (the .org was omitted)

With the agreement of the Liberal Catholic Church International, our web site lists now the places of worship under its jurisdiction. This is an effort to inform all Liberal Catholics about the churches where our Liturgy is celebrated, regardless of the organization they belong to. It is our hope that this first step will be followed by others leading to full intercommunion of all the movements within the Liberal Catholic Church.

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**THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH IN  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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3201 Pleasant Ave South  
Minneapolis MN 55408

**Rector: The Rev. Richard W. Curney**  
1-612-823-4276

**Parish of Our Lady, Mother of the World**  
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460 Station Road  
Rock Tavern, NY 12575  
**Rector: The Rev. Michael Warnon**  
1-845-496-4344

**Mission of the Holy Sophia**  
PO Box 3  
Stockholm, WI 54769  
**Priest-in-charge: The Rev. Wallace Zick**  
1-715-442-2519

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**PRESIDING BISHOP**

The office of Presiding Bishop  
is vacant due to the demise  
of the Rt. Rev. Tom Degenaars

email: [presiding.bishop@kingsgarden.org](mailto:presiding.bishop@kingsgarden.org)

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**THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC WEB SITE**

<http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch.org/>

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This issue of NEWS was made possible by the collaboration of:  
David S. Cargo, Pat Carlson, Judie A. C. Cilcain, Joan Warnon-Poortman, and Wallace Zick

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