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The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia

# Anglican Women's Studies Centre

## Let Go and Let God

By Revd Poihaere Knight



*The clergy team from Te Manawa o te Wheke supporting Revd Poihaere Knight at her ordination (front row wearing red robe) alongside Mrs Kamana Katene and Right Revd Ngarahu Katene at St Faiths Anglican Church, Ohinemutu, Rotorua on Saturday, 6th October 2012.*

Photo: Ash Martin

How does one put the last 13 years of their life into a few paragraphs in such a way that they honour those who went before them, honour those who have and are still supporting them and do it with such humility? This is a task which I will do my best.

Since the age of 13 I had known my God and loved Him with all my heart and soul. My mother, the Late Heeni (Jane) Hanna, was an inspiration and probably the catalyst to my own calling in 1999. Such naivety! I didn't realise the impact my request would have on so many.

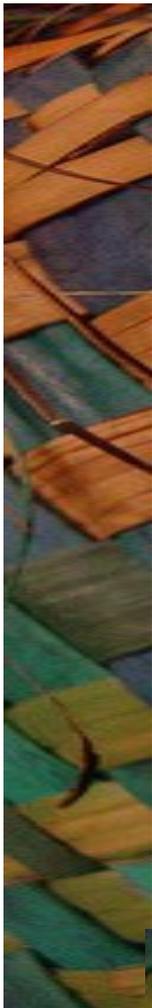
This process of the thought of having a woman in the ministry team in such a patriarchal iwi would take time to digest, so I was taught patience, which was good for this "bull at the gate"! An Archdeacon friend in Tikanga Pakeha church gave me a

very valuable piece of advice which I hold dear to me, "Let Go and Let God." To which with this sage advice, I have kept and remind myself daily.

Even when I was diagnosed with Breast Cancer in 2002, I did not lose faith in myself, my little whanau of our 4 year old son Morgan and my husband Kurei nor in the path that God was placing before me. Did I ever ask myself "Why me?" no. I asked myself "Why not me? I went the whole nine yards, Chemotherapy, Radiotherapy, operations to remove a very angry grade three tumour the size of a clenched fist and two years of anti-oestrogen injections, and all the while held my faith.

When the Bishop for the Manawa o te Wheke became Bishop Ngarahu Katene and the Vicar of St Faiths became Reverend Tom

## Let Go and Let God *(continued from pg 1)*



Poata, the wheels of change started to roll a little more in the forwards direction.

To show my sincerity for the role I wished to take on in the ministry team, I became a University Student again to study the Poumanawa Degree, majoring in Minitatanga (Ministry). I gave myself only three years to complete this degree as we then had two children (proving that there is always hope after treatment), a career, my walk in faith and a marriage to keep going.

Lo and behold I was diagnosed with a second tumour, which thanks to modern technology and early detection, the grade three tumour was stopped in its tracks and I only required a six week round of radiotherapy and am now on a five year anti-oestrogen programme. My faith was tested yet again, but held true.

I still finished my degree in the three years I gave myself and celebrated my graduation in July this year.

Amongst all of this activity, it was discerned that I was ready to be commissioned as a Kaikarakia

(*Lay reader*) in 2009, then ordained a Deacon in 2010 and October 6 2012 saw yours truly, ordained into the priesthood. What a journey it has been.

While in retreat last week, I came to the realization that all the joys, the trials and tribulations that have made me stronger on my journey with God since 1999, were to come to a close, so that the 6th of October 2012 was a new beginning on a journey into a ministry I know not what as yet, but I still strongly believe in the phrase "Let go and Let God."

May all the wrongs I have done in the past be forgiven, the good I did do be received with love and a new leaf be turned over so that our journey together with God be spirit filled.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone who has made an impact in my life and I ask for your continued support.

Your servant, Poihaere



## Lady Vicar



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- ◆ Made from medium weight polyester spandex knit
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**Testimonial:** Lady Vicar shirts really are the way to go! They are made in stretch fabric and designed to fit women's bodies – no matter what size! They brilliantly cover any of those unwanted but present "rolls" that we might have. I wouldn't wear anything else now. They wash in the machine – no special wash cycle needed. I love the easy wear and easy care aspect. And Greta makes them to each individual's measurements. She is a well known designer and seamstress having been invited to make clergy robes and those of at least one Cathedral organist over the years. I can't recommend them highly enough. I get great comments every time I wear them. *Revd Erice Fairbrother*

*Expressions of Interest to the Designer & Manufacturer:*

**GRETA MARK**  
[greta@aerothentic.com](mailto:greta@aerothentic.com)

# St Thomas' in Labasa leads the way

By Taomi Tapu-Qiliho



*This ordination was the first time in Tikanga Polynesia where three women co-celebrated at an Ordination Eucharist in the presence of two Bishops (Archbishop Winston Halapua & Bishop Api Quliho)*

St. Thomas Labasa on the island of Vanua Levu in Fiji proudly ordains its third female priest. Angela Suruj Prasad was ordained to the priesthood on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2012. She is of Indo-Fijian descent and is originally from the community of Batinikama, Labasa. Suruj is the second women of Indo-Fijian origin to be ordained and the third woman to be nurtured into priesthood at St Thomas' after Amy Chambers (2004) and Sushila Kamlesh (2006).

Suruj's ordination is a welcomed addition to the ministry team at St. Thomas. There are few women priests' in the Diocese as a whole and her contribution will be a wonderful contribution. She will play a huge part in the ministry to schools. St. Thomas operates two schools in the sugarcane farming town of Labasa. St. Mary's Primary School has approximately 800 pupils and All Saints' Secondary School also



the same. Amongst other parish duties, Suruj will assist with divinity classes which are currently being taught by the nuns of the Society of the Sacred Name.

Suruj brings a wealth of knowledge to the priesthood. Suruj worked for many years in the Fiji Development Bank. At the time, she was a Lay Minister. This was a ministry that she served in for many years. Upon retirement, she seriously considered the priesthood and was ordained to the diaconate in 2011. She is the mother of 2 sons Alvin and Richard, grandmother to two lovely grandchildren and the wife of Amuk Prasad. She gained a Diploma in Theology from the Pacific Theological College (PTC) through the PTCEE (education by extension) programme. She completed this through correspondence as she was working full-time. Her

ordination is a great inspiration to many women in her

local town and also in the Diocese. Labasa town is multi-ethnic and multi-religious and Suruj's gifts in ministry will be well utilised in mission outreach to women of other ethnic and religious groups. Suruj attended the Pacific Peacebuilders Training Intensive at PTC in 2011 and received training for Conflict



Awareness, Stress and Trauma Healing and Peacebuilding. These skills are an integral part of her ministry and equip her for her role as Peacebuilder through her calling as Priest in the church of God.

Suruj's ministry will be an asset to the ministry team in Labasa. As a woman, mother, priest, and leader of the church and her local community, she is well placed to serve God with her many talents and skills.

## The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies

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The Centre for Anglican Women's Studies, commonly known as the **Women's Studies Centre** was set up to serve and to advance the interests and needs of the women of this Church particularly those undertaking Theological training.

The Link Representatives from each Diocese and Hui Amorangi have been chosen for their leadership ability to identify, gather, facilitate, resource and encourage women in their educational preparation for ministry whether lay or ordained. It is hoped that the Women's Studies Centre can continue to enjoy the support of each Diocese and Hui Amorangi in this endeavour.



The issue of increasing numbers of women in representative positions across the councils and committees of the Church is seen as a high priority and the practice of intentional mentoring by those already in national and international representative roles is seen as a good way to expose women of this church to fulfill their potential as leaders.

Ensuring that women's voices and stories are heard now and in the future is also one of our continued aims whether it be by traditional methods of publication or using more contemporary technologies like website publication. We remain optimistic that through continued support, the needs of women throughout this Province will be valued and recognized.



### Women's Studies Centre Council Members — 2012/2014

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#### Hui Amorangi o te Upoko o te Ika

- [No current appointment—Contact the Hui Amorangi administrator](#)

#### Hui Amorangi o te Waipounamu

- [No current appointment—Contact Mere Wallace \(see above\)](#)

**EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER:** *The Women's Studies Centre is committed to encouraging and enabling women's voices and perspectives from across the diversity of the Church to be shared more widely. We acknowledge that women's experiences of church differ considerably and that resultant theological perspectives also differ considerably. In general the WSC does not exercise editorial control, rather we welcome as many voices as are willing to contribute.*