

CURRICULIUM VITAE

The Rev Laura Marie Piotrowicz

DATE OF BIRTH:

11 March 1977

DATES OF ORDINATIONS:

Deacon: 23 June 2005, Diocese of Rupert's Land

Priest: 11 June 2006, Diocese of Rupert's Land

ADDRESS:

20 Corbett Ave, St Catharines ON L2N 5M7



Click here to view video:

[Laura Marie Piotrowicz](#)

MINISTRY EXPERIENCES:

Rector, St. John's, Port Dalhousie (Diocese of Niagara; St Catharines ON) Pastoral-sized, suburban parish Full-time permanent appointment	2015-present
Rector, Wider Parish of Pelly Plains (Diocese of Brandon; Western Manitoba) 6-points, all family-sized, rural parish Full-time permanent appointment	2010-2015
Priest Associate, Church of the Ascension (Diocese of Niagara; Hamilton, ON) Program-sized, urban parish Part-time, term position	2006-2009
Chaplain, HMCS STAR (Canadian Forces; Hamilton ON) Part-time permanent	2007-2010
Honorary Assistant/Deacon, St John's Cathedral (Diocese of Rupert's Land) Pastoral-sized, urban parish Honorary Assistant	2004-2006
Youth Ministry Developer (Diocese of Rupert's Land) Full-time, permanent	2002-2006

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Faculty, Niagara University (Lewiston, NY)	2007-2009
ITER Research Fellow, Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, Victoria University, University of Toronto	2006-2009
Membership Development, Scouts Canada (Toronto and Kitchener, ON)	2000-2002

EDUCATION

Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.), Trinity College, Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto. <i>Research: Correlation of Prayer and Burnout</i>	<i>expected 2020</i>
---	----------------------

Master of Theology (Th.M.), University of St. Michael's College, Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto. <i>Thesis: "An Eco-Theological Framework to Inform and Support the Relief and Development Work of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund"</i>	2012
Certificate of Specialization in Theology and Ecology (C.S.T.E.), Elliott Allen Institute of Theology and Ecology, University of St. Michael's College, Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto.	2005
Master of Divinity, honours (M.Div. Hons.) Trinity College, Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto. <i>Thesis: "Spiritual Needs and Development of Youth and Young Adults Within a Faith Community"</i>	2005
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) McGill University, Montreal Major Political Science; Minor Canadian Studies	1999

DIOCESAN, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT:

Diocesan:

Bishop's Ministry Scholar (Niagara)	2016-present
Embark Young Adult Mentorship (Niagara)	2015-2017
Greater St Catharines Futures Conversation (Niagara)	2015-2017
Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Diocesan Representative (Brandon)	2013-2015
Executive Committee (Brandon)	2012-2014
Canons and Constitutions (Brandon)	2012-2014
Environmental Stewardship Team (Brandon)	2012-2014
Youth Ministry Task Force (Brandon)	2010-2012
Chair, Response to Bishop's Charge to Synod (Brandon)	2012
Local Arrangements and Worship Team, Provincial Synod (Brandon)	2012
Speaker, Women's Retreat (Brandon)	2011
PWRDF Resource Team (Niagara)	2006-2010
Greening Niagara Team (Niagara)	2007-2010
Keynote Speaker, "The Theology of Caring for Creation: A Response to Mike Nickerson's "Living on Earth as if we want to stay" (Niagara)	2008

National:

Anglican Fellowship of Prayer National Executive Leadership team for national consultation 2015, communications/ newsletter/social media, lead/liaison in prayersofthepeople.org, Canada Prays, Thy Kingdom Come	2015-present
"Engage Freedom! Anglicans Against Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery" participant and contributor	2018
Primate's World Relief and Development Fund 3 terms on Board of Directors: Strategic Plan 2012-15, chair Strategic	2007-2016

Plan 2015-2018, chair "Fred Says" food security campaign, Board Observer to Youth Council, co-chair Partnerships Steering Committee, Development Committee, chair Gender committee.
 Partner visit to Philippines (2012).
 Speaker's Bureau.

Council of General Synod PWRDF Representative, member of Social Justice subcommittee	2013-2016
"Peoples of Faith Moving Forward in Reconciliation" (KAIROS) PWRDF representative	2015
Creation Matters member	2013-2014

International:

Ecumenical Women at the United Nations	2017-present
Canadian Representative, Anglican Communion Delegation to the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (New York)	2018
Canadian Representative, Anglican Communion Delegation to the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (New York)	2017
Participant, Core Clergy Consultation "How We Speak About God" (St. George's College, Windsor, UK)	2011
PWRDF Representative to Mutirão at the World Council of Churches 9th Assembly (Porto Alegre Brazil)	2005

Other Speaking Engagements:

Speaker, "Praying into the Calm" at Diocese of Huron AFP Fall Conference (London, ON)	2017
Key Speaker, "Prayer Matters" at Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Fall Conference (Spaniard's Bay, NL)	2017
Theme Speaker, "Our Role in Creation Care" at British Columbia and Yukon Anglican Youth Movement Conference "Guardians" (Abbotsford, BC)	2013
Session Leader, "Care for Creation" and "Church as a Verb" at Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land Provincial Synod "Walking in the Moment" (Brandon, MB)	2012
Panelist, "Morality in Human and Non-Human Beings: A Response to Dr. Deane-Drummond on her article "Shadow Sophia in Christological Perspective: The Evolution of Sin and the Redemption of Nature" (University of St. Michael's College; Toronto, ON)	2008
Panelist, "The Immediate Need for Theological-Based Action Concerning the Ecological Crisis" World Council of Churches North American Relationship Division Annual meetings (Toronto School of Theology; Toronto, ON)	2008

Keynote Speaker, "My World, God's World: Hurts and Healing in Creation" at 2008
Peace It Together (Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg MB)

OTHER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Port Dalhousie Beautification and Works Committee	2016-present
St Catharines Social Justice Network	2016-present
Port Dalhousie Community Refugee Sponsorship Initiative	2016-2018
Scouts Canada leader	2002-2006
Girl Guides of Canada leader	1995-2006

PERSONAL INTERESTS:

Research Interests: Ecological theology, prayer, gender justice, food security, social justice initiatives, mission, community building.

Personal Interests: Reading, Writing, Dogs, Canoeing, Camping, Running, Winnipeg Jets

PUBLICATIONS, HONOURS, &C.

- weekly blog "Everyday Christianity" <http://everydaychristianityblog.blogspot.ca>
- four "PWRDF Lent Prayer Resource" - 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016. Toronto: Primate's World Relief and Development Fund.
- three "PWRDF Advent Prayer Resource" - 2012, 2013, 2014. Toronto: Primate's World Relief and Development Fund.
- "Sacred Water: An Easter Reminder." KAIROS Canada, Spirited Reflection, April 22 2014. <https://www.kairosCanada.org/sacred-water-an-easter-reminder>
- 20 articles in Bjork, Robert E. (ed.) *The Oxford Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010. ("Abbeville," "Aseity," "Bate, Henry," "Béarn," "Cherbourg," "Cornwall," "Datary, Apostolic," "Exemption," "Grenoble," "Irish Church," "Meaux," "Provisions, Papal," "Renne," "Thomas of York," "Touraine," "Vannes," "Vendôme," "Villa Franca," "Wessel, Johann," "William of Alnwick.")
- "Energy Smart Scout Camps" in, *Our Oil Dilemma: Reflections and Queries*. Toronto: KAIROS Canada, 2009.
- "Greening Niagara Parish Resource." Hamilton: Diocese of Niagara, 2007.
- Contributions in Anglican publications:
 - Anglican Communion News Service blog (2017-present)
 - diocesan newspapers [Niagara, Brandon, Rupert's Land] (2002-present)
 - "The Community" blog (2012-2016)
 - youth website [generations.ca] (2005-2006)
 - PWRDF website (2005-2016)

The Rev. Laura Marie Piotrowicz's responses to the Eight Questions

1. Please share with us some of your spiritual autobiography. How did you come to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and a priest in the Church of God? What have been some of the milestones in your journey?

Though baptised and confirmed Anglican, I had a largely unchurched childhood. As a young adult, a friend invited me to church before a social event (on Ash Wednesday!), where I experienced a spiritual transformation. I became aware of my deep spiritual void that wanted fulfillment, and with the help of a welcoming and affirming parish, began to attend worship, read the scriptures, ask questions, etc.

In the Eucharist I first articulated what that my life had been missing was Jesus. I eagerly explored my baptismal vows, and as my faith deepened, I became fully committed to the living a Christian life. Church became a verb for me, where I seek ways to live into my baptismal vows and the Marks of Mission.

Though preparing for law school, I felt a strong nudging towards ordination. Working for Scouts and encouraged by my mentors, I tried a few seminary classes - and loved it! With school and internships, I developed a stronger understanding of being called to the priesthood. When people ask how I became a priest, I reply that God is more stubborn than I am (thank goodness!)

Since ordination, my journey has included exceptional opportunities (such as serving on the Board of PWRDF); yet I find the key milestones are moments of pastoral ministry: praying with someone who grieves, celebrating the Eucharist, welcoming a child of God in baptism. In these moments I feel God's abundant grace, and I am profoundly thankful for the opportunity to serve as priestly companion.

2. Tell us about what you do to tend to your own spiritual health and vitality. What are the practices of contemplation, prayer, and service that are most meaningful to you? How will you work to preserve these habits and encourage others in the diocese to tend to their own spiritual after you take on the busy schedule of a Bishop?

I'm quite intentional about maintaining my spiritual life through prayer: for me prayer is a deeply personal conversation with God. These conversations feel like I am returning to a fountain that provides strength and inspiration. The more time I spend with Jesus, the more comfortable I am discussing how much I love being one of his followers.

For structured prayer, the Eucharist grounds and sustains me. My daily prayers include the divine office in the morning, and an Ignatian *Examen* every evening.

My spirituality also embraces unstructured devotion and meditation; prayer ebbs and flows with life. I feel God's presence when walking my dogs on the trails, I know heavenly peace when I am canoeing, I try journaling and labyrinth walking.

I blog weekly as a spiritual discipline (seeking glimpses of the kingdom in the everyday), and I see a spiritual director and a confessor priest monthly. I consider my work in social justice initiatives to be prayer in action.

My spiritual practices are flexible enough that a busy schedule does not disrupt my disciplines. I encourage others to discern a pattern of spiritual practice which suits their lifestyles, keeping prayer a priority in personal and professional lives, through provision of resources and by modeling practices. Should I be elected, I would be entirely available to colleagues, praying with and for them regularly, ensuring that we all have resources for nourishing and supporting our spiritual lives.

3. What is your vision for the Diocese of Rupert's Land, and what would be your top three priorities for moving towards that vision?

Overall, my vision for the diocese would be a vibrant community of worship and service, rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

My intention would be to lead the diocese in a collective discernment to articulate a) who we are as a diocesan family, b) who we feel God is calling us to be at this time, and c) how we feel God is calling us into that reality.

Three priorities towards that vision include:

1. Strengthening diocesan bonds and supporting collaboration: with an expanded diocesan geography, I would prioritise greater connections of the diocesan family; exploring ways to know and support one another, upholding and celebrating our varied ministries. I find shared ministries, social events, and prayer partnerships to be effective to build community.
2. Embracing a culture of community involvement: I hope our churches will know and be known in their neighbourhoods, deeply integrated into the life of the community: through outreach programmes, worship, use-of-space, etc.
3. Empowering responsible risk-taking. Being bold in trying new ways to live our part in God's mission, while maintaining realistic evaluation. A willingness to be flexible is key as the church responds to changing demographics and secularisation: in my 6-point parish some communities held weekly worship on weeknights, to enable inclusion for some and ensure a pastoral presence in each community each week.

4. How do you see the relationship between celebrating the distinctiveness of the Anglican way of being Church and being open to ecumenical cooperation and full communion partnerships with other Christian traditions?

My understanding of the Anglican maxim of "unity in diversity" focuses on the intentionality of unity over diversity. This unity depends on (and grows from) the trust of an intentional community, where members commit to one another with a genuine desire to be together. As a Christian family, we delight in God's eternal invitation to the table. As Anglicans we celebrate our identity: we are beloved children of God and heirs to the Kingdom, rooted in scripture, reason, and tradition.

Working under the Lund Principle (act together as much as possible, except when our beliefs are profoundly different) allows us to be enhanced by other experiences, and to share the beauty of

Anglicanism with others. By doing so, we are better equipped to articulate our Anglican theology and practice.

Ecumenical cooperation is like a deep friendship. Like being with a close friend, we don't lose who we are, and the friendship can bring out the best of us. In these relationships we share who we are, the connection helps us to better understand ourselves, and together we can identify our similarities (while respecting our differences).

In my experience, the practicalities of shared ministries and ecumenical partnerships necessitate good communication, careful planning, and realistic evaluation: but they are positive and worth exploring. They do not diminish who we are as Anglicans, and instead demonstrate creative examples of meeting people's spiritual needs.

5. How would you foster unity within our Diocese and enable us to be connected to and engaged in the work of the Anglican Church of Canada, the wider Anglican Communion, and other global partnerships? Why?

I value authentic community, and through respect, trust, and communication, work towards building and maintaining. As a diocesan family, I find it helpful to spend time together as friends and colleagues.

Should I be elected, I would emphasize community-building with the clergy by engaging in pastoral ministry (such as hospital visits, spiritual counselling, regular parish visits) and in casual social occasions (such as hosting dinner parties, informal conversations, sporting events), in person or via technology.

As an example, I served a newly amalgamated 6-point parish (formerly two x 3-points). In addition to conversations of finances and service times, we openly shared our fears and vulnerabilities. This enabled a growing relationship of grace and deep trust. We learned of people's gifts and interests, and enabled one another to offer those gifts. Flexibility meant weekly worship happened in each community (for some mid-week), and in months with 5 Sundays we came together as one large parish family in celebration (worship and potluck!) The early trepidation became unified celebration.

The ministry of the broader church is an extension of local and diocesan community. While I have connections at church national and international, I would use these as a means to encourage, empower, and equip those within the diocese with opportunity to exercise their ministry in that different environment.

6. What is your understanding of marriage, and how would you engage the whole Diocese in its ongoing discernment around the inclusion of same gender partners in this commitment?

I understand marriage in the church to be an opportunity for a couple to declare to families, friends, and community their intention to include God in the secular formalisation of their relationship.

I believe that every person is holy, made in the image of God; as such every person is entitled to legal marriage and a blessing of that union within the church.

I support the amendment to the marriage canon; yet am committed to respectful dialogue and conversation on these issues, especially in preparations for General Synod 2019.

Having spent time reading, studying, and discussing "This Holy Estate," I am impressed by the care and consideration given to the matter, as a wide variety of voices are included. I find it important for the church to engage with this material, acknowledging diverse opinions to better understand the convictions we all bring with us as we gather at the Table.

While the issue of same-gender blessings and marriages is presently of high importance, I think there is a broader conversation to be had about the nature of marriage within the church: such as the marriages of couples not affiliated with a church yet wishing to use the "pretty building" as a backdrop, or possible adoption of the European model, whereby marriages are legal events performed by commissioners, and those wishing church blessings arrange that afterwards.

7. .How would you engage the younger generations in the Church and its mission?

In addition to supporting present engagement with youth, I would initiate a youth/young adult mentorship programme, where the youth would have their spirituality recognised, fulfilled, acknowledged, and built upon. A programme in Niagara saw youth connect with one another, discussing theology and faith practice, while concurrently engaging with a mentor to apply those learnings in their lives; I have been richly blessed by serving as a mentor in this.

I would ensure that a present youth voice would not merely be tokenism, but authentic engagement. Part of my role, representing the Anglican Communion at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, was inviting youth to participate in advocacy meetings at the Canadian Permanent Mission; their passion, knowledge, and faith-based commitment to justice are inspiring. For example, one youth articulated concerns on long- and short-term negative impacts of decreasing services in health care and education, specifically in rural areas.

I would maintain a priority of leadership development to support ministries to children, youth, young adults, and families. Children's events could be held regionally, leader's retreats offered, etc. I would implement an evaluation on retention, especially during times of transition (teens after confirmation, young adults after high school) as a priority.

Building on present relationships, I would support involvement at diocesan, national, and international events, both Anglican and ecumenical. I would encourage younger generations to 'think outside the box' to seek new ways to share the Good News in meaningful ways.

8. How will you encourage this diocese in its continuing response to the call to healing and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and what role do you see an Indigenous Anglican Church playing in this process?

Knowing the journey towards reconciliation is long and challenging, I celebrate that it has begun. I am grateful for the leadership of indigenous brothers and sisters, sharing their ancient wisdom through a heart-based approach to being the church.

We have much to learn. We have a long road to walk. We are blessed by the commitment to walk it together.

If elected, I would support continued education initiatives offered through diocesan indigenous ministries, Indigenous Bishops, our national Reconciliation Animator, and beyond. Such initiatives enhance our cohabitation on treaty lands, and call us to commit beyond words to commit a deep-rooted intention to know and love the history and traditions on the land that sustains us all.

I have been privileged and influenced by a variety of experiences: supporting partners in Brazil and the Philippines during PWRDF visits inspired me to engage here at home. I have participated in the KAIROS blanket exercise, the PWRDF mapping exercise, the shared reading aloud of the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I have stood alongside Haudenosaunee, against protestors, defending treaty rights at Short Hills Provincial Park. I have advocated for the adoption and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In Birtle, after officiating the funeral for a victim of intergenerational impact of Indian Residential Schools, I was invited to the reserve to participate in the overnight vigil honouring her life.