

New book provides framework for ecumenical workshop on women in ministry to be held Nov 18-19 in Saskatoon



**Marie-Louise
Ternier-Gommers**



**Rev. Heather
Kleiner**



Mona Goodman



**Rev. Amanda
Currie**

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

A new book by a local author will provide the framework for a unique ecumenical workshop about women in ministry to be held Sunday, Nov. 18 and Monday, Nov. 19 at Queen's House Retreat & Renewal Centre in Saskatoon.

The book *Catholic Women in Ministry* by Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers of Humboldt will provide a framework of themes for the two-day workshop, addressing topics such as identity, nourishing the spirit, ministerial authority, sacraments, relating to male ordained colleagues, and ministry role models.

"Women who serve professionally in ecclesial ministry have much to offer the church and much to share with one another," write the four facilitators. "The purpose of bringing together ordained and lay women employed in ecclesial ministry of all Christian traditions is to share and celebrate our journeys of faith and of call, to learn from and to support each other."

The facilitators are four women with a diverse background in ministry.

Marie-Louise Ternier-Gommers, is an author, editor, preacher and retreat facilitator who has been active in ministry in various Christian denominations. She was recently hired by St. Augustine's parish in Humboldt as the new Adult Faith Education Coordinator. She also works half-time as editor of Oblate missionary publications for OMI Lacombe Canada.

Rev. Heather Kleiner, is a recently-retired Lutheran pastor residing in Saskatoon. She served as chaplain in a number of seniors residences and in an acute care hospital, which provided opportunities for ecumenical partnerships.

Mona Goodman has worked in both education and ministry and is currently employed as a pastoral associate at Holy

Family Roman Catholic Parish in Saskatoon.

Rev. Amanda Currie, who is originally from Ottawa, serves in ministry at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon and is married to Roman Catholic theologian Nicholas Jesson.

Ternier-Gommers' recently-released book *Catholic Women in Ministry* is based on 26 interviews of women who have served as lay ecclesial ministers within the Catholic tradition in Western Canada.

"In an effort to protect the anonymity of the contributors, the author has created composites based on these shared stories," writes Gertrude Rompré in a review published on www.ecmenism.net

"Identifying characteristics have been removed ... While Ternier-Gommers herself laments the fact that 'women still do not feel safe offering the Church the reality of their experiences and insights, both positive and negative, without anonymity,' the final result is a refreshingly honest collection of narratives where tough issues and new insights are named."

The critical questions are raised within a context of the author's love of scripture and her abiding conviction in the wisdom of the Second Vatican Council, states Rompre, a chaplain at St. Thomas More College and a founding member of the Réseau Ministeria Network, a national network of Catholic lay ecclesial ministers.

"While [Ternier-Gommer's] previous work, *Finding the Treasure Within* (Novalis, 2002), began the dialogue between her own lived experience and her denominational context, *Catholic Women in Ministry* is the next logical step. In this more recent work, the dialogue is moved into the communal revealing the fact that the call of lay women to ministry within the Catholic Church is not an anomaly but a movement of the Spirit."