

## **Ordination Celebrations**

2019 was a special year for those of us who were fortunate to be amongst those women in Scotland first ordained as Priests 25 years ago. It was wonderful to have this moment recognised by the team who organised the celebration service for us in our Cathedral here in Perth. More of this to come.

Five years earlier the Church of England invited those women first ordained as Priests in Scotland to join with them in a celebration event marking 20 years since our ordinations. What a glorious day it was for the small number of us who made that journey. We gathered with picnics at Westminster where I met up with a colleague ordained with me who now serves in England. We marched with hundreds of other women from Westminster passing the parliament buildings, along the embankment and on up to St Paul's. We had brought robes earlier in the day and all changed in time for a photo opportunity with the Archbishop on the steps of St Paul's. I had never managed to visit St Paul's before and my first experience is one I will never forget as although there were hundreds of us to process in to find our places the congregation continued thunderous applause until we were all seated. The sound was spine tingling as it resonated around that incredible building. It was humbling to share with our colleagues in the Church of England along with many friends and family in such a momentous celebratory event.

I had thought this would be the only event which would celebrate my ordination to the Priesthood anticipating I would quietly remember our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary myself but how wrong I turned out to be. I and all of those ordained Priest in Scotland 25years ago are incredibly grateful to the group who worked so hard to organise the wonderful and moving service in St Ninian's. It was a lovely touch that all of us ordained 25 years ago were able to wear the same style of vestments. One of the most moving parts of the service was remembering those who have died since we were ordained, their names were read and a rose placed in a vase.

A special part of the day for me was having a colleague ordained with me in Glasgow and Galloway stay with us that night. We had a quiet evening reminiscing although we did watch the final of 'Strictly' too! In a way for us the celebrations continued the next day as we had been invited to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary by participating in worship where we were ordained 'St Mary's Cathedral' Glasgow. I preached on the readings of the day and my colleague led the service and celebrated. It felt very special to be there as for me at least it triggered memories of the significant moments of my ordination.

Thanks are due to all who supported and continue to support those of us in ordained ministry not least being our families.

**Reverend Canon Shelley Marsh**

**Thanks to Peter Marsh and Sandy Butler for the photographs**





