

# *In Memory*

## Deacon Currie Cormier

† January 30, 2007 †



### With The Backdrop of the Holy Spirit

*by: Wayne Corrion*

Remembering our Brother in Christ

One of his final requests was that we display his eighteen-inch guardian angel cross with a backdrop that would symbolize the Holy Spirit. So we were able to resurrect a 24" x 48" banner used for past confirmation classes in our parish.

The banner is red with a white dove descending that has gold streams flowing from the dove in multiple directions.

The day after his funeral I was reflecting on all the beautiful personal stories people were telling of how his life had touched theirs. It then occurred to me how his insightful request of the backdrop of the Holy Spirit. Currie realized the presence of the Holy Spirit working in his life and how appropriate this was now at his last days here. This was a message from him to all of us to be aware of the continual presence of the Holy Spirit's action in our lives.

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His son and other family members had amazing stories of how Currie's love for them had taught them not only how to love, but also to understand the love our heavenly Father has for us.

The red in the banner was never more brilliant than when it was displayed along side of Currie as he lay in state at the vigil service. It was deepened by the stories told of how Currie gave of himself in love to his wife Donna, his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It continued to deeper hues of red as we heard of how he touched the lives of brother deacons, neighbors, friends, and his parish family.

A further testimony to this wonderful man's love for us was the great number of people that came to say goodbye to him at his funeral. His love had exceeded the capacity of seats at our two-hundred-fifty family parish of St Joe's in Gaines, and his love had exceeded the capacity of seating of St John's, Fenton as well.

Hundreds of people formed a very long funeral procession to his grave site for final prayers of committal. Even there the backdrop of the Holy Spirit was present. Strong winds were blowing all around us on that very cold morning.

As every one was leaving the committal service I looked out of my vehicle window only to see Currie's casket alone. Lying there on that cold afternoon, it reminded me of how lonely the walk of a deacon's life can be at times. We are there sometimes when no one else is; just the deacon and the power of the Holy Spirit comforting, loving, being the presence of Christ to those in need. Currie fulfilled this service of the deacon to great depths. And as these quick thoughts of Currie rambled in my mind I saw a whirlwind of snow build up around his casket and ascend as if the power of the Holy Spirit was lifting Currie to heaven.

The Holy Spirit surrounds us, bringing us to, in and through situations in our lives of service and through that brings the face of Christ to people in our world. Currie was well aware of this and wanted to leave us with one last sermon of how the backdrop of the power of the Holy Spirit is always working through us.

May the soul of Deacon Currie Cormier be carried to heaven by the Holy Spirit and may he rest in the warm embrace of our heavenly Father's love; a love that Currie gave to all of us.

## A Great and Visible Sign...

by *Marv Robertson*

When I viewed the Holy Spirit banner prominently displayed above Currie's coffin, I took a trip down "memory lane." I first met Currie at our first formation class, held on September 19, 1987, the same day Pope John Paul II was in Detroit, meeting with several thousand deacons and wives from throughout the U.S. and Canada.

The Holy Father greeted those assembled in these words: "It is a special joy to meet with you because you represent a great and visible sign of the working of the Holy Spirit in the wake of the Second Vatican Council which provided for the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the Church."

As I came to know Currie and Donna better over the years of formation, they both openly shared their deep reverence and love for the Holy Spirit. They were both active in the Charismatic movement.

On June 30, 1990, Bishop Povish addressed Currie and the other deacon Candidates at their ordination Mass with these words: "Like the men the apostles chose for works of charity, you should be men of good reputation, filled with wisdom and the Holy Spirit, that they may be strengthened by the gift of your sevenfold grace to carry out faithfully the work of the ministry." Currie personified that sevenfold grace. His demeanor gave witness to the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Deacon Currie was truly "a great and visible sign of the working of the Holy Spirit."

## Deacon of Deacons

by *Jack Daunt*

My wife, Sue, and I had been involved for ten years with RCIA at our parish. Each year, at the Rite of Election, I would observe a deacon with a pony tail assisting the bishop. I was discerning a call to diaconate at the time and I admired his sense of presence at the altar.

Finally, after a Rite of Election at St. Patrick's of Brighton, I had an opportunity to meet him and his wife, Donna. We chatted for a few minutes and then I took the plunge, asking him if he would become my mentor. At first he said he did not think he would have the time due to his many commitments.

Little did I know that not only was Currie active as a deacon at St. Joseph Parish in Gaines, but he assisted Bishop Povish and, later, Bishop Mengeling at many diocesan liturgies and served on the Diocesan Worship Commission. In addition, he was involved with Befrienders, was a hospice volunteer, active in the K of C, on the parish building committee, and was a master gardener and very involved with a garden club. All this in addition to being a thoughtful and loving husband, father and grandfather.

We continued to chat for a while before Currie said he had changed his mind and would become my mentor. I was to learn later what a momentous occasion this would be to my formation.

During Candidacy we became close friends. It was late in our formation when some of us felt we needed additional training in liturgy and sacraments. With twenty Candidates and limited time, it just was not possible for everyone to adequately practice baptisms, weddings, assisting at Mass, vigil services, committals, etc. Six of the Candidates lived in the Flint area and Currie was willing to help us with some extra training and practice. Currie's generous sharing of his time and talent is just an example of his giving nature.

It has been a family tradition that Currie and Donna have made and decorated the wedding cakes for their children and grandchildren. This past summer, when Currie was undergoing chemotherapy, they made the fourteen hour drive to Arkansas to attend the wedding of a granddaughter and, yes, they made the wedding cake.

When Currie first told us of his health problems we were fearful for his well being. We did not want to lose a brother that was so well loved and admired. We knew we had to pray with as much intensity as we could muster. Like Currie, we were hopeful and optimistic. Many of us had the courage to ask God for a miracle. But modeling ourselves after Currie, we came to the conclusion that we must pray as Jesus did in the Garden, "Father, thy will be done."

On January 30, 2007 we lost a "Deacon of Deacons." We are thankful for having him in our lives. We will miss him greatly but he still remains as our guiding light. We pray for him that he intercede for us to our heavenly Father.

May he rest in the loving arms of our Father.



## In Memory (continued)

### Filled Pews Were Testament to Love That Community Had for Currie

*excerpted from article by Julia Zaher*

*(Reprinted with permission of The Flint Journal/Fenton Press)*

Beloved friend Currie Cormier was laid to rest recently at St. John Catholic Church in Fenton.

His funeral was a sight to behold. Deacons and their wives filled the first six pews of the church. The Knights of Columbus stood guard over Currie's simple coffin, made by monks in Iowa.

The altar was filled with priests who con-celebrated the funeral Mass with the Most Reverend Carl Mengeling, bishop of the Diocese of Lansing.

Son Kurt Cormier and his wife, Yvette, and two friends sang an amazing a Capella rendition of "It is Well With My Soul."

I sat looking at my friend Currie and thinking about how the seasons of the church defined his life.

In the liturgical calendar, most of the year is called Ordinary Time, not because it is common, but because it is numbered. The extraordinary times in the calendar are times such as Christmas and Easter.

Ordinary Time is where most of our life takes place, and there is nothing "ordinary" about it. The births of children and grandchildren, the deaths of loved ones and friends, the celebration of marriages and the mourning of divorces, graduations and bankruptcies mostly happen in Ordinary time. Currie was born and died in Ordinary Time.

As it says in the book of Ecclesiastes, "There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven."

As a master gardener, Currie was perhaps more attuned to the calendar and the seasons than most, knowing there is "a time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted."

Gardeners and farmers grasp the importance not just of seed time and harvest, but of the dormancy of winter when the land rests and it appears that most plant life has died. Of course, it is merely asleep in wait for the spring.

Currie knew the winters of life when it seemed that nothing would ever blossom again: the death of their son, the loss of a grandchild, the battle with personal demons.

He also understood the words of Jesus: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener."

The gardener prunes the branches so they will produce greater fruit, and so God prunes the lives of His children.



Currie, we love you. We plant you in the ground in the dormancy of winter. Although our eyes cannot see and our hearts cannot fully comprehend, you are already in that place of eternal springtime, the place God has prepared for those who love Him as you did; a place where the value of pruning is revealed as we blossom into the likeness and image of the God who loves us, who created us to be whole, at peace, full of joy, basking in the light of His love forever.

In heaven, I believe it's called Ordinary Time.

### Ponytail Deacon

*by Tom Franklin*

I remember the first time I saw Currie. We had come as candidates to our first deacon community event (which turned out to be the last deacon community retreat), and I wondered if we would really fit in - and here was this guy with a ponytail, who radiated friendliness. He sensed my discomfort and came over, gently, quietly. He introduced himself and he immediately put me at ease, and he listened to what I was saying - and not saying, giving me an example of what it means to be present without making a big deal about it. I learned from him, and I am a better person for having known him.



"It is not Death that will come to fetch me, it is the good God.  
Death is no phantom, no horrible specter, as represented in pictures. In the catechism it is said that death is the separation of the soul and body, that is all!  
Well, I am not afraid of a separation which will unite me to the good God forever."  
Thérèse of Lisieux

