



**Southeastern Pennsylvania  
Women's Ordination Conference  
Philadelphia, PA**

April 26, 2009

Dr. Leonard Swidler  
Professor  
Department of Religion  
Anderson Hall  
Temple University  
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Dear Len,

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Women's Ordination Conference congratulates you on the day of your special celebration. We recognize your contributions to interreligious dialogue and the ecumenical movement, to democratic church reform so that the rights of all Catholics are respected, and to the education of countless generations all over the world.

But most of all we recognize the contributions you and your wife, Arlene Anderson Swidler, made to the cause of women's ordination in the Roman Catholic Church. From the earliest days of the movement, you were involved in publishing analyses that both identified the weaknesses of the church's position and that provided easy-to-understand rationales for change. Last year, just months before she died, we were happy to present Arlene with the Mary Magdalene Award honoring a woman of courage. We are so grateful that you have continued to support our cause and countless others.

We hope that you enjoy this day. We are so sorry that we cannot join you, for this day Roman Catholic WomenPriests will ordain women as priest and deacon in Philadelphia. A few years ago such a public ordination would have been unimaginable to all of us, but especially you and Arlene, who anticipated this day so long ago. That it should occur today which should be set aside for honoring you is unbelievable. Having to make the choice is unbearable. But we will be with our sisters and we will carry your spirit with us.

Fondly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Regina', written in dark ink.

Dr. Regina Bannan  
President  
For the Core Committee