

Sesquicentennial: A Rookie Shepherd Blessed

By Louise Aloy



It is truly an honor to have served as Shepherd to Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts-Schori and husband, Dr. Richard Schori, during the Sesquicentennial Celebration from November 9 -11, 2012.

I had been anticipating this weekend for a very long time, well over a year. I was very worried and concerned at times that I would oversleep or get her schedule mixed up or get lost driving in Honolulu. I reviewed the weekend events over and over and over again. I had notes all over the place, in a notebook, on my Blackberry, on post it notes and on my Samsung tablet. I wanted everything to go perfect and prayed feverishly daily that all would go well. I rehearsed in my mind the streets and avenues from the hotel to the cathedral, to the Pacific Club, to Washington Place and so forth. I even woke up at the crack of dawn on Friday morning and drove to the cathedral for a test run. It has been a while since I drove in Honolulu so I wanted to make certain I would not get lost.

I attended General Convention in 2009 in Anaheim, and again in 2012 in Indianapolis as a Deputy. I passed her many times in the halls between the HOB (House of Bishops) and the HOD (House of Deputies), going to church, committee hearings and even in hotel breezeways. But never in my dreams did I feel I could be by her side to care for her needs and get to know her a little better until this special 150 year celebration for the Diocese of Hawai'i. Going back a few years in 2006, I was at the ECW Triennial Meeting in Columbus, Ohio when she was elected. It was a very exciting time for all of us. I still have a button that reads, "It's a girl!" that was given to me while the bells were ringing throughout the convention hall. What a joyous occasion! A couple of years passed and I attended the Anglican Indigenous Network conference in Vancouver, Canada. Presiding Bishop Katharine was in attendance as well. Delegates from 5 nations were present and each day we ate our meals together, including Presiding Bishop Katharine. I was thrilled to be in her presence and always remained in awe when she spoke.

I was up at 5:30 am each morning to go over the schedule for the day, reviewing when and what time she needed to be where and who was she supposed to meet. By now, I had the entire weekend schedule memorized. I even had a cheat sheet in the car. While I was anxiously awaiting the first order for the day, she had already begun her day jogging between 6:00 am and 6:30 am. When we finally met up, she wanted to walk to the cathedral and all 3 of us embarked on a wonderful ten minute journey. We chatted about all sorts of things while walking to and from the cathedral. I was immediately put at ease by her down to earth personality along with her gentle and compassionate voice. She had a keen ear when I shared many things about the Hawaiian Culture and the various islands with her. As the day passed into evening and there were more events to attend, I felt so blessed to be able to assist her in any way possible. She was always very courteous and only spoke kindness from her heart. She was very comfortable to talk to and with, and never once

placed any demands. She was so easy to please and I wanted even more so to be able to take care of whatever it was that she may need or want. Instead, she would ask me if it was okay with me to walk or what I would rather do. She would go along with my decision. It was a wonderful feeling to have her ask me if I was comfortable and okay.

The weekend was going by much too quickly. After a very long day and evening on Friday, Saturday was already calling for more events. Fortunately, there was some down time in the afternoon and she wanted to take care of business and prepare for Sunday's sermon as well. On Saturday evening, she truly enjoyed the music of the 'Iolani High School band and a Taste of Honolulu, so to speak, with all the different Pacific Rim dishes being served. She enjoyed the festive concept and was thrilled to be greeted by so many people.

Sunday morning came and I wanted to be a Great Shepherd so I hung out with her until she processed into the cathedral, she was the last one in line, go figure! I thought she should have been the first in line and she kept telling me to go into the church but I wanted to make sure she was okay. She had asked me the day before what could she do with all her leis. She towed a very large plastic bag filled with all of the leis that were given to her over the last couple of days from the hotel as we walked on Bishop Street that morning to the cathedral. After she put on her vestments, I got all her leis ready and told her to place one lei on as many of the grave sites as possible until she ran out of leis. She was so very happy to have had the honor to do such. We started with Bishop Lani Hanchett and his wife and also with the Kennedy's and then branched out to others. It was a beautiful gesture and I know she felt blessed just as I was feeling so very blessed to watch her place each lei with her gentle touch.

By afternoon, the weekend celebration had come to an end. It was getting close to their departing flight times. I had arranged for a late check out for them and with a couple of hours to spare, they took me to lunch. We got a guide from the front desk and made our way downtown about a block from the hotel and had lunch at Dreamers Diner. Yet, there was another wonderful opportunity to chat about family and work and faith and trust in our daily walk with Christ. While she and I sat and ate and chatted, Richard was busy getting all of his photos together on his laptop. He was amazingly fast with putting together the photos because he gave me a CD before we got to the airport and she gave me gifts that I will forever cherish the rest of my life.

Before we knew it, it was "Aloha Oe" after dropping off Dr. Richard at Hawaiian Air and Presiding Bishop Katharine at Delta Air. I thanked the Lord for a most wonderful weekend and especially one without incident. I was able to keep her on schedule, kept her on task and even managed to fit in one reporter for an interview. I felt very good that the weekend went well and after returning the rental car, I was able to catch an earlier flight home. I felt content and pleased about the entire weekend and I was headed to my island home, Maui No Ka Oi!

Life is good!

Me ka mahalo Bishop Bob for appointing me as their Shepherd, for now I have lifelong memories.

Malama pono