

Commemorating The Rev. Florence Li Tim Oi

On the 80th Anniversary of the Ordination of the first Anglican Female Priest



General Convention Resolution 2022: D079 resolved that "this (80th) General Convention acknowledges churchwide programs in celebration of the 80th Anniversary(of the Ordination of Florence Li Tim Oi) between the Episcopal Church and other Provinces of the Anglican communion in partnership around formation, theological education and open cultural exchanges... This resolution calls for the National Church to develop a virtual celebration as well as in- person pilgrimage to the sites instrumental in Florence Li Tim Oi's ministry in Hong Kong and Macau.

The Dioceses of California, Los Angeles, and New York has formed advisory groups to assist in the 80th Anniversary planning programs.

2024 Events Around the Country

Diocese of California

January 25, 2024
Evensong Service
Grace Church Cathedral, San Francisco, CA

Diocese of Los Angeles

February 10 – 11, 2024
The Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori,
Keynote, Celebrant, and Preacher

Diocese of Los Angeles will hold a two-day event which includes a worship celebration, panel discussion, musical performances, and an evening social.

Diocese of New York

March 11, 2024, 5:00 pm
Asian Sacred Music Concert
By DNY Music Directors and Musicians

May 10, 2024, 5:00 pm
AAPI Worship Celebration
Cathedral St. John the Divine, New York City
Guest: The Rev. Christina Rees, Trustees
Chair, Li Tim Oi Foundation, UK

Nationwide – January - July 2024

Celebration of the 50th Anniversary on the
Ordination of Female Priests



FLORENCE LI TIM-OI

FIRST WOMAN PRIEST IN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION, 24 JANUARY 1944

Florence Li Tim-Oi (5 May 1907 – 26 February 1992) was the first woman to be ordained to the priesthood in the Anglican Communion on 25 January 1944.

Florence Li, born in Hong Kong, attended Canton Union Theological College to receive her theological education before returning to Hong Kong in 1938. After working for two years in All Saints Church, in Kowloon, helping refugees in Hong Kong who fled mainland China in the midst of the Second Sino-Japanese War, Li was sent by Bishop Ronald Hall to help with refugees in Macau. Six months into her new post, she returned to Hong Kong to be ordained as a deaconess on 22 May 1941 by Bishop Hall.

The Japanese occupation of Hong Kong and of parts of China had made it impossible for Anglican priests to get to neutral Macau, where there was no resident Anglican priest. In January 1944, Li travelled through Japanese-occupied territory to the small town of Hsinxing, as yet unoccupied by the Japanese, to meet with Bishop Hall; from there they proceeded to Shaoqing where he regularised her administration of the sacraments by ordaining her as a priest on 25 January 1944. It was to be 30 years before any Anglican church regularised the ordination of women, so unsurprisingly after the war there were protests concerning her ordination; to avoid further controversy she resigned her licence, though not her priest's orders.

She later moved to Canada where she was eventually able to exercise her role as a priest.

Feast Day Collect:

Almighty God, who pours out your Spirit upon your sons and daughters: Grant that we, following the example of your servant Florence Li Tim-Oi, chosen priest in your church, may with faithfulness, patience, and tenacity proclaim your holy gospel to all the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

- From Lesser Feasts and Feasts