



May 12, 2007

Dear Sisters in Christ,

We are in a time of confusion within our beloved Order. Many of you have received communication from some of the former national leaders of the Daughters of the King, which, frankly, has increased the confusion. Rumors abound. I hope to set the record straight.

First let us review the events of last summer. The decision at our most recent Triennial to grant a vote to all delegates representing DOK chapters in the US (in accordance with Article VI of our bylaws) has been widely misunderstood and criticized. Recognizing Daughters who have chosen to remain "Anglican" but not "Episcopal" seems to be at the heart of the tension, even though most of the rhetoric targets the Roman Catholic Daughters. Although the challenge to the decision of the Credentials Committee at Triennial was voted down by well over two thirds of the delegates, some members who objected have been unwilling to accept that vote.

The vote did NOT make us an "ecumenical organization," or change the definition of who may become a Daughter in any way. Although we give thanks for women of prayer in every church, we remain primarily, though not exclusively, an Order in The Episcopal Church. The Triennial of 1988 opened the Order to other branches of Christendom that retain the historic episcopate. Since then we have welcomed Roman Catholic chapters. Since 2000, we have welcomed Anglican chapters in this country, since their churches also retain the historic episcopate. More recently we have welcomed several chapters in the ELCA (Lutheran) churches, since they are now in communion with the Episcopal Church.

Some fear the vote changes the nature of the Order from what it has been historically. We do not believe this to be the case. In 1891 our founder, Margaret Franklin, wrote to the Rev. Ralph Kenyon that the Order now had chapters in Canada and England and she wanted the Order to "embrace our Anglican sisters." (Her handwritten letter is in the DOK Archives.)

Some of our former national leadership, in particular, would like to overturn decisions made at the last Triennial and even bylaws passed in 1988. Certainly they are at liberty to send their proposals to the Province Presidents for consideration, and urge the Order, Province by Province, to change course at our next national meeting. They recently met with the National Council to present their views, and that was an appropriate venue for serious consideration. But we also have seen communications that cast doubt on the integrity of the current leadership and indeed the identity of the Order. Most troubling was a website which used a new name—"The Historic Episcopal Daughters of the King," coupled with the trademarked cross and logo of The Order of the Daughters of the King, Inc., as well as the history of the Order that was published for our centennial in 1985.

On five occasions, between March 5 and April 21, we requested that this website be dismantled. To no avail.

Our notifications were sent by letter and e-mail; one request was made in a face to face meeting with a written list of our three chief concerns. The fifth request did result in removal of the cross and logo, but no more. Finally the Executive Board concluded that further requests from us would accomplish nothing. We then had our attorney send a letter to the three past presidents, Whitty Bohmer, Elizabeth Hart-Mitchelson, and Sue Schlanbusch, and Christine Budzowski, webmaster, advising them that if they did not comply by removing the remainder of the trademark infringements as listed, a law suit would follow. The Executive Board's action was taken to protect the Order's intellectual property and name, in accordance with the laws of this land.

Upon learning that the infringing materials still in question had been removed from this website on Tuesday May 8, 2007, we notified our attorney that day to withdraw the law suit.

I am very grateful that our prayers for compliance have been finally answered, and give praise and thanksgiving for all the spiritual guidance each of the Executive Board received during this process. I deeply regret that a letter from an attorney was necessary to achieve compliance.

We would welcome the opportunity to post the historical material of the Order on the national website of the Order of the Daughters of the King and would be grateful if Christine Budzowski, webmaster, could forward the materials to Jamie Peabody, current webmaster for the National website.

I encourage every Daughter to pray that God will bring all the members of our beloved Order to share His vision for our future. When we believe we know God's will, we need to check it with scripture, with others on our journey, and with circumstances, as well as common sense. As we come to understand God's will for us let us also pray for courage, love and faithfulness to take each step we are granted to see.

Blessings and love in Christ, and FHS,

Joan Dalrymple
National President

cc: The National Council
Advisor and Past President, Ethel Boyle Ripley
The Rt. Rev. John W. Howe, Chaplain

PS: Please contact your Province Presidents if you need more information. Province Presidents, please e-mail this letter to your diocesan presidents and ask them to kindly forward this to chapter presidents.