

# DIACONAL SUNDAY February 26, 2012

## A Reflection for Diaconal Sunday

By Diaconal Minister Karen Triomphe



During a formation event I had attended we learned that Deaconess Evelyn Middelstadt of the Lutheran Deaconess Association (LDA) had been murdered the previous evening. We also learned that she had been murdered by one she had cared for on an ongoing basis. We sat in stunned silence and then as a community we offered our prayers to those who knew her so well and to her family.

Deaconess Evelyn's murder was considered foolishness to the world. The media reported how people were amazed that one who was so old would allow someone into her office late at night. "What was she thinking? She should have known better? She should have known to lock her doors and to think about her own safety."

Sister Evelyn's Pastor said it best when he replied. "She could not keep her door shut. She was doing what she was called to do—to minister to those in need. And sometimes that meant she needed to take risks." She was more concerned for the young man than she was of her own safety. She had worked with this young man for a few years but this time she had to say no and in anger he hit her and she died. I'm sure this young man did not intend to kill her but it happened. He lashed out at the one who had been there for him. This event reminds me so much of Jesus. The very ones he came to save and help were the ones who lashed out and killed him. Did he walk away from them? No, he fulfilled what he had been sent to do. Sister Evelyn did the same. She could not walk away from the ones she had been called to help. Her death brought the awareness of what it means to be a Deaconess, a Deacon or Diaconal Minister. We are called to serve those on the fringes. We are called to be there for those who are in need. Evelyn's death brought the awareness to the people of what it means to lay your life down for others. For the world it is foolishness; however, we know that God's foolishness is wiser than the wisdom of the world. *"For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."* (1 Cor. 1:18)

As Deacons, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers we have been called to help others; not in fear, but in love by offering the hope of Jesus Christ. As a community we can lift each other up in our ministries knowing we are not alone. May we continue to honor and remember Sister Evelyn as she lived her life in Christ and may we follow in her footsteps living in the power of the Spirit and the wisdom of God through Christ Jesus. Amen.



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in Canada**  
*In Mission for Others*

[www.elcic.ca/leadership/for-ministers/  
diaconalsunday](http://www.elcic.ca/leadership/for-ministers/diaconalsunday)