

Church Celebrates Deacon's Ordination

St. Alban's Anglican Church held an ordination ceremony for its new priest Nov. 21.

By BROOKE AUSTILL
Daily Sun Staff Writer

LADY LAKE

A struggle for survival prompted a local deacon to become a priest.

St. Alban's Anglican Church held an ordination ceremony Nov. 21 for Father Greg Koon, who had served as a deacon at the church for more than three years.

Koon, of Tavares, said he felt called to the priesthood as a youngster, but he held off to pursue other goals.

As a teenager, Koon worked on a charter fishing boat and worked his way up to boat captain. He ended up a ship captain, sailing all over the Caribbean with three cruise lines.

It wasn't until June 2006 that God started knocking on Koon's door again.

After being diagnosed with colorectal cancer and undergoing two rounds of chemotherapy, radiation and surgery to remove the tumor, Koon said God had his attention.

"He can play pretty rough when he's trying to get you to listen," he said. "All it did was make my faith stronger."

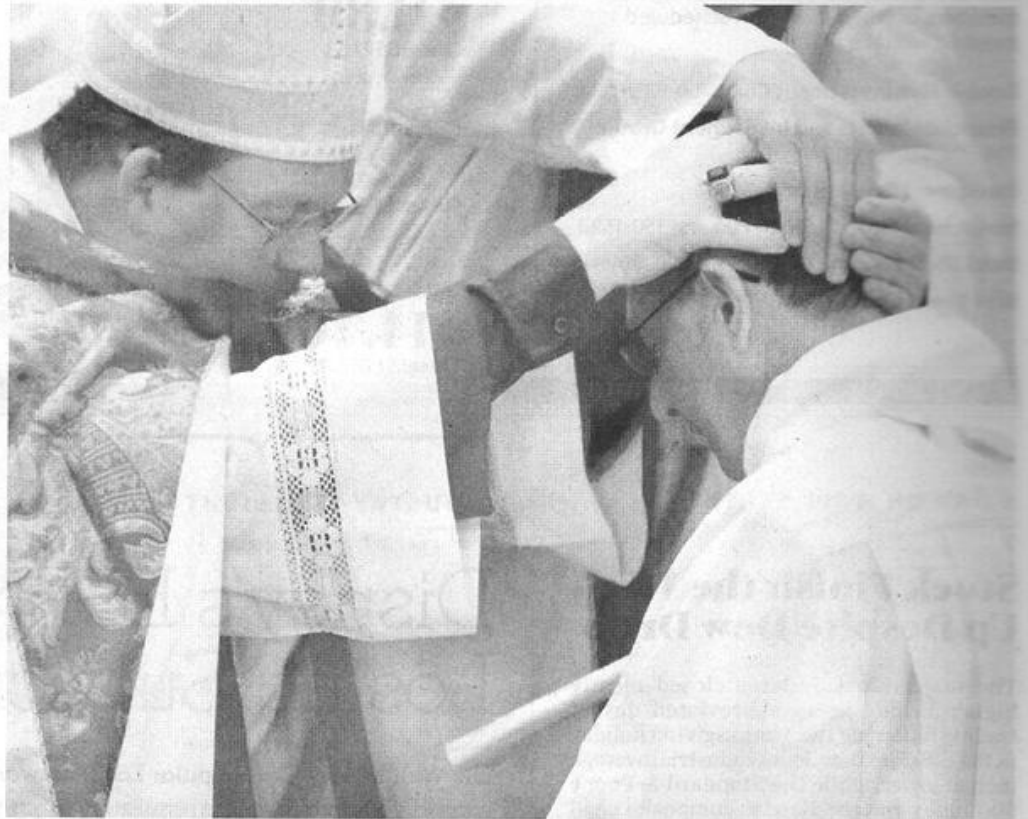
When he survived the cancer, Koon decided it was time to pursue the priesthood.

For five years, he took online courses through the Anglican Province of Christ the King at St. Joseph's of Arimathea in California.

To become a priest, as well as a deacon, Koon was required to pass a canonical exam through the seminary.

Now that he is officially a priest through the diocese, he will preside over the congregation as a curate.

Koon was ordained by the Bishop Suffragan, the Right Rev. Dr. John E. Upham, for



Submitted photo

The Right Rev. Dr. Show Upham, left, lays hands on Greg Koon during his ordination into the priesthood Nov. 21 at St. Alban's Anglican Church in Lady Lake.

the Diocese of the Atlantic States through the Anglican Province of Christ the King.

Through the diocese, Upham presides over St. Alban's, and he said he has watched Koon's progress.

"I watched him develop over the years and overcome obstacles, much of which were health-related," he said. "It was wonderful to be able to see him overcome that."

The studies and procedure to enter the priesthood are very rigorous, Upham said, and he was impressed with Koon's dedication.

Upham said with a curate now in place, he is looking forward to the continued growth of the parish.

Koon also is looking forward to growth, as well as serving the community. After all, that's what a priest does, he said.

"I'm delighted to serve the people of Lady Lake, The Villages and surrounding areas," he said. "That's what a priest is for."

St. Alban's Anglican Church is at 625 W. Lady Lake Blvd. Mass begins at

9:30 a.m. Sundays and 10 a.m. Wednesdays.

Brooke Austill is a staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 753-1119, ext. 9088, or brooke.austill@thevillagesmedia.com.