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Illinois woman takes courses to become deacon with cardinal's knowledge

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A woman at an Evanston, Ill., parish is taking courses in preparation for the diaconate with the blessing of her pastor and with the full knowledge of Cardinal Francis George.

The issue of women deacons has been under discussion for several years at the parish, St. Nicholas, and Lynne Mapes-Riordan, a wife and mother, offered to become the first candidate if the Vatican allows an extension of the diaconate to women. George has met with Mapes-Reardon and others from the parish. He reportedly told them he is favorably disposed to the idea and would bring the matter before Pope Benedict.

A full account of the matter appears in Tuesday's edition of the *Chicago Tribune*.

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