

Lesbian bishop-elect clears crucial hurdle: Mary Glasspool of the Los Angeles diocese

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A majority of dioceses in the Episcopal Church have confirmed the election of an open lesbian as a bishop in Los Angeles, bringing her one step closer to consecration. The Diocese of Los Angeles, where Mary Glasspool was elected as an assistant bishop three months earlier, announced confirmations from 61 of the denomination's 110 dioceses on March 10.

A majority of diocesan bishops, however, must also consent to Glasspool's election before she can be consecrated a bishop. Episcopal Church headquarters in New York keeps the tally on the bishops' votes, but generally does not release a report until the outcome is sealed.

"I look forward to the final few consents to come in from the bishops in the next few days, and I give thanks for the fact that we as a church have taken a bold step for just action," said Los Angeles Bishop Jon Bruno.

The diocese booked the Long Beach Arena for May 15 in hopes they could consecrate two female bishops elected in December. Bishop-elect Diane Bruce of San Clemente, California, has received 78 consents from diocesan committees—a number that indicates, by comparison, some level of opposition to Glasspool's election in other dioceses.

Glasspool has until May 8 to receive the necessary votes from bishops. If her election is confirmed, she would be only the second openly gay person to be elected a bishop in the U.S. church or in the wider Anglican Communion.

Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, the spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion, said last year that Glasspool's election "raises very serious questions" and urged Episcopal bishops to reject it. A majority of Anglicans in the 77-million-member communion reject homosexuality as unbiblical. The election of an openly

gay priest as bishop of New Hampshire in 2003 caused widespread dissent. -*Religion News Service*