



All Saints Parish

9am Hybrid Service Meeting ID 715 310 766 Password 014954
December 28, 2025

Welcome The Venerable Jennifer McKenzie

Bidding Prayer

Presider

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this county.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore. And now, to gather up all these petitions, let us pray in the words let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

Presider and People

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Presider

The Almighty God bless us with his grace +; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. Amen.

The Lessons

The First Lesson

Genesis 2:4b-9,15-25

(God creates man and woman to live in obedience to him in the Garden of Eden)

Hymn #82 Of the Father's love begotten

The Second Lesson

Genesis 3:1-23 or 3:1-15

(Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden)

Hymn #66 Come, thou long expected Jesus

The Third Lesson

Isaiah 7:10-15

(God promises that a child shall be conceived who will be known as "God with us")

Hymn #81 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming

The Fourth Lesson

Luke 1:26-58

(The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High)

Hymn #78 O little town of Bethlehem

The Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:39-46

(The Virgin Mary is greeted by Elizabeth and proclaims her joy)

Hymn #S-247 'The Song of Mary' Magnificat.

(found in the front Service Music section of The Hymnal 1982)

The Sixth Lesson

Luke 1:57-80

(John the Baptist is born and his father rejoices that his son will prepare the way of the Lord)

Hymn #94 While shepherds watched their flocks by night

The Seventh Lesson

Luke 2:1-20

(Jesus is born at Bethlehem and is worshiped by angels and shepherds)

Hymn #87 Hark the herald angels sing

The Eighth Lesson:

Luke 2:21-36

(Jesus receives his name and is presented to Simeon in the Temple)

Hymn #104 A stable lamp is lighted

The Ninth Lesson:

John 1:1-18

(The Word was made flesh and we have seen his glory)

Hymn #100 Joy to the world

Presider

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Christmas Season Blessing

Celebrant

May Almighty God who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. *Amen*

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. *Amen*

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. *Amen*

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever.



There is a basket at the back of the church in which to place your Offerings of life and labor to the Lord.



Every Stone - *The story of Hymn 104 'A stable lamp is lighted'*

In the late 1950's, the poet Richard Wilbur was approached by the composer Richard Winslow to write a poem that he could set for an upcoming Christmas concert at Wesleyan University. Wilbur, who was a relative newcomer on the poetry scene at that time but who would eventually become the Poet Laureate of the United States, accepted the invitation, put pen to paper, and wrote a poem that he called A Christmas Hymn. In his recounting of this story, Wilbur says that his friend Winslow set this new poem for solo voice and harpsichord in a style that reminded him, the poet recalls with a grin, of John Cage. For all of the non-John Cage fans or scholars, this means that the music was probably not particularly warm and fuzzy, and it was not, apparently, exactly what Wilbur himself had in mind.

But in the early 1980's, the organist, composer and General Theological Seminary professor David Hurd found the poem A Christmas Hymn and took Wilbur at his word, setting the text as a hymn. He named his new hymn tune after Lily Rogers, his choir director when he was a boy soprano at Saint Gabriel's Church on Long Island, a woman whose middle name was Andújar. Hurd's hymn, which is quite warm and fuzzy with plush harmonies and gently rocking rhythms, quickly found its way into The Hymnal 1982—Hymn 104, which we sing today, familiarly known as "A stable lamp is lighted."

While this hymn is appropriately found in the Christmas section of the hymnal, many congregations also sing this Christmas Eve hymn on Palm Sunday because of the hymn's gently rocking refrain. For Wilbur took this refrain for his poem not from the story of a manger with shepherds and angels, but from the story of a procession with cloaks and a colt.

The poem's refrain comes from the moment in the Palm Sunday Gospel when Jesus silences the Pharisees who are anxious about the noise level of the crowd by telling them that even if these crowds were silent, "the stones would shout out." These stones are the crux of Wilbur's poetry, the heartbeat pulsing at the center of each verse, where "every stone shall cry, and every stone shall cry." Wilbur knew the truth of both Christmas and the Palm Sunday liturgy: that what is true at the end is also true at the beginning, that the Passion and the Palms and the Incarnation are one story, and that this story and these stones have something to tell us.

Explanatory note adapted with permission from a sermon preached by Mother Erika Takacs, 24 March 2013, Saint Mark's, Philadelphia