

The Bicentennial Kneelers

A Brief History

On January 24, 1999, the Bicentennial Steering Committee endorsed the proposal of needlepoint kneelers for the Chapel as a major project for the Parish Bicentennial in 2003. A committee comprised of Florence Whitworth, Wilton Young and Rebecca Millar was named.

After discussions with Carolyn Shubatt, Needlepoint Chairman for the National Cathedral, Nancy Lukoskie, the finisher and restorer of needlepoint at the Cathedral was contacted. She agreed to work with us. On March 22, 1999 she visited the Church, met with the Committee and Rector, and measured the Chapel for kneelers along with the Baptistery (in the hope that someday, kneelers might be made for the Altar rail there as well).

On April 12, 1999, Jeanne Bauer from Fredericksburg, Virginia, a needlepoint artist Ms. Lukoskie had recommended, met with the Committee and agreed to submit linear drawings for the Chapel kneelers in September.

The first meeting of the needlepoint stitchers was held October 28, 1999. A luncheon was held in the Parish Hall. At that time, the Rector, the Rev. Edward C. Chapman, and Rebecca Millar, Chairman, explained the goals and scope of the project. The volunteers attending were Dortha Gray, Alicelynn Getty, Peg Hickle, Alice Honeycutt, Edith MacMannis, Sherry Schmitt, Jack Vrieze, Valerie Vrieze, Jane Workmeister, Florence Whitworth and Wilton Young.

On November 11, 1999, the volunteers met with our artist, Jeanne Bauer, for the first in a series of workshops. Although the canvasses for the Chapel had not yet been received, the Committee asked Jeanne to develop canvasses for the Baptistery. There had been so much enthusiasm and such a positive response from the congregation about the Chapel that the Committee felt we should get the kneelers for the Baptistery also. The first four of the seven canvasses for the Chapel were received on December 6, 1999 and the last three on January 27, 2000, at one of our workshops.

By the time the canvasses for the kneelers in the Baptistery were delivered in November, 2001, our group had grown to include Betty Brant, the Rev. Mary Jellison, Donna Martin, Jacqueline Rogers, and Jane West. Some members made a trip to the National Cathedral in the fall to look at the needlepoint kneelers there.

We continued to meet one Thursday a month following the 10:30 Eucharist throughout the duration of the project. Each person would bring a lunch and then stitch for much of the afternoon. Frequently, we would have visitors stop by to see our progress. During the time of the work, two members of our group, Jack Vrieze and Florence Whitworth, died.

On December 11, 2002, seven kneelers were delivered for finishing to Nancy Lukoskie in Easton, Maryland. The remaining seven were mailed in February. On August 26, 2003, the kneelers were picked up in Easton and brought back to Cumberland for their dedication on Sunday, October 12, 2003.

This Bicentennial Project was underwritten entirely by individuals and families in the congregation who purchased a specific canvass or who donated to the Emmanuel Crosses. The kneelers were stitched on thirteen-count canvas, using over 200 different colors of Persian wool. There are 169 stitches per square inch, and an estimated 1,808,976 stitches in the fourteen kneelers. While many needlepoint workers use the formula of one hour of work for each square inch stitched, that is not realistic for this project, since so much time was involved in achieving the blending and shading of the fibers used on the canvases. Although exact records of the hours spent working on each canvas were not kept, it is safe to assume that 12,000 to 14,000 hours were spent to complete the project.

For everyone who sees, touches, or kneels upon these Bicentennial Kneelers to receive the Sacraments, for Baptism, for Healing, private devotions or any other Church activity, we hope you enjoy them. They were created with love and for the Glory of God.

- Rebecca Millar

The Story Cycles

The genius for the scheme of the Bicentennial Kneelers comes directly from ancient and medieval Christians. In an age of almost universal illiteracy, they taught and learned Scripture lessons and lives of Saints from series of panels painted around Church walls and domes. Much like cartoon strips in modern times, one could see a story unfold from scene to scene. Found in such famous places as the Basilica in Assisi and the Baptistery in Florence, as well as in countless churches, chapels and shrines throughout the Western World, such story cycles have long since become favorites of the faithful and of lovers of Sacred Art. This idea was taken up at Emmanuel in the mid-Twentieth Century in the lancet windows of the Chapel, which depict scenes from the Old Testament and the Life of Christ. Again, at the time of the Sesquicentennial in 1953, windows were added around the High Altar, resulting in a four-piece cycle on events in the life of the Virgin Mary.

The Chapel Kneelers

The subject of Mary and the Infancy of Christ was matched and expanded on the Kneelers in the Chapel. This is appropriate first because the name of the Parish, Emmanuel, refers directly to the Incarnation of Christ, and secondly because the multitude of Marian symbols throughout the Church bespeaks a special devotion to the Virgin. The cycle begins with the Annunciation, continues to tell the story of the birth and childhood of Jesus, and concludes with his coming of age as depicted in the scene where he teaches in the Temple in Jerusalem. As such, the Chapel Kneelers also make a full cycle of the Marian Year in the liturgical calendar, which begins March 25th and ends with the Epiphany season.

The Baptistery Kneelers

The subject of the story cycle in the Baptistery is the life of John the Baptist. As in these 200 years thousands have been brought to Christ and baptized in Emmanuel's font, so it is fitting to honor the person who first called the faithful to the New Life of ministry and servanthood, and who baptized Our Lord in the River Jordan. As well, it is at this Altar and rail, particularly on Christmas Eve and at the Easter Vigil, that families gather to share both the joy of a young life joined to Jesus and also their unity in the other principal Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. John's life story parallels that of Jesus with an annunciation, a set of mystic prophecies and a violent ending; indeed, the two stories intertwine. Yet John, like the rest of us, is not the Author of Salvation but a subject of it. So it is in this place that through and with him we are all one in Christ.

This Spiritual Guidebook

Sacred Art is not décor, and it is not intended that it be admired solely for the technique and the effort involved in its creation. That certainly goes for these Bicentennial Kneelers. They were designed and made as tremendous works of love and devotion in the hope that they would be seen as such and used as such. Correspondingly, while this booklet celebrates the artists and remembers those honored and memorialized in the Chapel and Baptistery, it is not first a tribute or a souvenir. Hopefully, whether standing before the Kneelers and their Altars, or simply looking at the pictures and words, the reader will find reflection upon the Scripture passages and meditations a valuable tool for devotion. Perhaps in one's spiritual preparation for the Christmas season, perhaps as one celebrates a birth or a baptism or meditates upon the meaning of a Christian Life, this booklet can serve to open a window for the soul. The texts themselves have had a variety of functions. Some were read to the stitchers as they did their work, some were written for liturgical use on Sunday, December 24, 2000, most comprised slide presentations on the kneeler themes Ascension Day 2002 and 2003, and the balance were composed expressly for this book.

Finally, it must be acknowledged with the fullest gratitude, that no effort such as this exists in a vacuum. So it is that art lovers viewing the Kneelers will soon recognize figures borrowed from the likes of Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael and Fra Angelico. So, too, I wish to express my thanks to Silvano Cardinal Piovanelli of Florence whose guidebook helped us to frame our thoughts about the story cycles, and to Raymond Chapman whose Stations of the Nativity (Morehouse Publishing, 1999), helped me to understand the devotional potential for this booklet. Lastly, we acknowledge Clare, the Patron of Needleworkers.

- Edward C. Chapman

The Annunciation

Luke 1: 26 - 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was set from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women." But she was greatly troubled at the saying and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born of you will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

New life happens in springtime,
and it's supposed to.

New Life happened that springtime
and it surprised even the most hopeful dwellers in prophecy.

She surely was a serious young woman,
no more than a girl, really,
and what happened to her astonished beyond all measure;
a lesser woman would have never withstood it,
but she was blessed among them, this little Mary.

What would it be to have an archangel in the living room?
What could one say?

This one came courting,
he knelt before her, he brought her flowers.

He came with a message, a question,
the Divine Request.

Would she? he asked.

How could she? she asked.

Their eyes locked in a moment that would last all eternity.

God can, was the answer.

It always was, and is, and shall be.

The Cosmic YES was spoken,
and she did.

Given in loving memory of the lives of Richard Douglas Roque, Elinor Boyd and Robert W. Fink, Lulu and Robert J. Fink, Elinor Shriver and J. Thruston Boyd and Lt. Col. and Mrs. Vincent B. Roque By Drs. Magno and Barbara Roque and their sons Robert and Steven.

Stitched by Valerie Vrieze

The Visitation

Luke 1: 39 - 47

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, an blessed is the fruit of you womb! And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, an my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, he has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the humble and meek; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity for ever."

What intimacies are spoken

between women with child?

What needs to be said?

What is understood without words?

Two moons hence from the angel' s visit

she went up to the hills

to see her cousin, her big sister

her wise counselor.

Before Mary could whisper her secret

Elizabeth knew the Good News.

The bearer of a miracle

could recognize another miracle

because the miracle inside her proclaimed it –

for the first time, but hardly for the last.

And in that moment Mary knew

the fulfillment of all prophecies was within her;

and in that moment, she gave voice

to the Divine Purpose.

As surely as the Mighty One

had blessed this lowly one beyond all imagining,

so would He reverse the circumstances

**of a world without hope,
raise up the weak, fill the hungry, scatter the proud, cast down the oppressors.**

Open our hearts, O Lord, to hear the Word that lies beyond words.

**Given in thanksgiving for our mothers Jean Chandler Knipp Gerwig and
Elizabeth Glass Mayfield Chapman, and our daughter Jean Chandler Glass Chapman by the Reverend Edward
C. Chapman and Mary Ann G. G. Chapman**

Stitched by Alicelyn Getty

The Nativity

Luke 2: 1 - 7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shown around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to the, " Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased."

Dark was truly dark two thousand years ago;

no city lights obscured

the sky between the heavens and the earth.

Night was silent then;

no noise disturbed

a dark and hushed world.

In Bethlehem, in Judea,

in Nowhere in Particular

a certain couple none would hospice

gave birth to Light and Life.

The purple sky exploded.

The heavens erupted with songs of joy.

The humble beasts heard a baby cry

and poked their noses in to investigate

their newly-born Creator.

Did they by instinct have

what scholars' lives pursue,

so basic, so essential,

better grasped in innocence than complexity?

Theologies and doctrines cannot be found in stables.

This night was too holy

for analysis, for interpretation.

Give us children' s eyes, O Lord,

that we first may see the simple truth.

Given in memory of her niece, Kendall Jeanne Moll by Sherry Moll Schmitt

Stitched by Sherry Moll Schmitt

The Presentation

Luke 2: 22 - 35

And when the time came for their purification under the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord ") and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And inspired in the Spirit, he came into the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for the revelation to the Gentiles, and for the glory to thy people Israel!" And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

The fullness of truth

is not seen, not known, by all, in an instant.

It unfolds

at first to the wise, the holy,

to those whose lives are spent in hope and prayer –

who cannot die before fulfillment,

because without it, they cannot truly have lived.

And one day, Simeon was allowed to die in peace

his every dream before his waking eyes.

They came to fulfill their obligations

faithful to the Law of Moses.

A sacrifice was called for

and they underwent the rituals.

The prophet had yet another for them:

another prophecy; another sacrifice.

Mary would know unnatural pain,

her man child, again in her arms,

the sword in her heart.

She would be required to be faithful unto that.

Simeon knew, and Anna knew,

and could now depart in peace.

She was faithful,

and so may we.

Given in thanksgiving for their children, Molly R. Whitworth,

David G. Whitworth, Jr. and Horace P. Whitworth, by Florence R. and David G. Whitworth, Sr.

Stitched by Florence R. Whitworth, Jacqueline Rogers and Rebecca M. Millar

The Flight into Egypt

Matthew 2: 13- 15

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all the region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more."

What quality of evil kills babies

for the sake of power?

And how would a father expect it?

Not every father talks with angels.

Joseph put his faith in them,

his family and his fate

under their wings.

Who to marry,

where to go and when

were answers they supplied

before he formed the questions.

He did as he was bidden.

He found his faith confirmed.

They packed up,

they moved out,

they followed the path another Joseph knew,

that led to refuge and to safe return.

Did they now go in trust alone,

or did they pause to ask the question:

**What quality of evil kills babies
for the sake of power?**

**The kind that Baby's power would destroy
in God's good time.**

Given in memory of Lucy W. Wyckoff by George M. Wyckoff, Jr.

Stitched by Alice Wyckoff Honeycutt

Teaching in the Temple

Luke 2: 41 - 52

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; and when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking him. After three days they found him in the Temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." And he said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

Confirmation, Bar Mitzvah,

Coming of Age, Rite of Passage

often ritualized, often celebrated,

often stumbled upon.

Every year the Holy Family

uncles, aunts and cousins, the whole family,

and friends

went up for Passover in the Temple.

He was twelve.

The time was right.
This time he lingered,
listening, asking,
and in his doing so, revealing.

Were they wise enough to know
or did they simply marvel?
And would they still be there
when he returned, next time, to teach?

Worry, panic, admonition
when they burst upon that scene.
How hard it is to recognize
a boy become a man.
But he made his mother proud!

His infancy and childhood were complete.
The parents' work was done,
and she had treasures for her heart.

Given in thanksgiving for our sons John Manuel Millar and William Nixon Millar by John Decker and Rebecca Manuel Millar

Stitched by Rebecca Manuel Millar

Annunciation to Zechariah

Luke 1: 5 - 14, 18 - 20

In the days of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. Now while he was serving as a priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer is heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth." And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." And the

angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this news. And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things come to pass, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time."

We waste our time, our world, our lives in impatience,

when there' s nothing we can do about it.

Who hopes for an heir, an offspring?

Who prays for peace?

Who sits on a housetop and waits for Messiah?

The faithful? The foolish?

Our time passes, our world turns, our patience never matters.

God' s is another matter; it does.

In God' s time, Salvation slowly set in motion

when life began in a place given up for dead.

Was He oblivious to longing,

heedless to anguished hope?

Was He infinitely wise,

alone knowing when time was right and hearts prepared?

A childless wife was said to be an object for discard –

a waste of time and effort and resources (under the Law).

Elizabeth and Zechariah loved beyond hope, beyond reason,

beyond perceptible purpose.

When they had lived beyond patience,

Time was on their side - and ours.

Elizabeth was not barren. She was old and hadn' t waited long enough.

Zechariah, however, was speechless

Be patient with us, too, Dear God.

Given in memory of George M. Young and in thanksgiving for my family,

George G. Young, II, Mary Beth, George M. Young, II, Kathryn and Elizabeth

by Mrs. George M. Young

Stitched by Jane Workmeister

Naming of John

Luke 1: 57 - 66

Now the time came for Elizabeth to be delivered, and she gave birth to a son. And her neighbors and kinsfolk heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they would have named him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said, "Not so; he shall be called John." And they said to her, "None of your kindred is called by this name." And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, "His name is John." And they all marveled. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea; and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

Promise becomes reality at birth.

Prophecy was fulfilled in the first breath, first cry,
incarnate in wrinkled, wriggling helplessness.

And this was only the beginning of prophecy,
the first moment of a dawning and eternal Reality.

For it was this improbable
that foreshadowed the Impossible.

He would forerun the Great Dawning,
he would herald the Light in the darkness
that would guide the way of peace.

He would prepare hearts and minds and souls
to receive forgiveness,
to know tender mercy.

What was a father to say
to all this?

First things first:
he was a gift from God,
so his name was John.

Open the eyes of our hearts, Dear God,
that we may see your hand at work
in the world about us.

Given in memory of George D. and Mildred Hickie
The Reverend Percy C. and Elizabeth Adams
by George W. and Peg Hickie

Stitched by Peg Hickie

Preaching in the Wilderness

Matthew 3: 1 - 12

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Now John wore garment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit that befits repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

There is no compromise with the Will of God,
nor is there any mystery to it.

If there is any misunderstanding, the roots
lie within our hearts, our minds, our souls.

So God sends His messenger, his prophet
to focus in our faith.

He challenges our comforts – living in the wilderness,
dressing in skins, feeding on bugs.

He questions our motives – why do we care?
why do we listen? who warned us to save our skins?

He pierces the façade of our important schedules
and impressive business.

The time is NOW. The process has begun.
His winnowing fork is in His hand.

We may be wheat. We may be chaff.

The distinction is in the decisions we make.

**Uncompromising God - you will not stray from the
path of love.**

**Transparent God - you have revealed yourself, your nature,
your intention in your messenger, and in your Incarnation.**

All giving God - what more can you do?

Give us strength to turn and see and listen.

**Given in thanksgiving for her mother Rachel Pengelly Eckhart
and her sister Leah Eckhart Rephan by Edith Eckhart McMannis**

**Given in thanksgiving for James D. Sloan and Eleanor G. Cutter by
Josephine B. Sloan**

Stitched by Edith Eckhart McMannis

John Baptizing Jesus

Matthew 3: 13 - 17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

**It was a simple moment,
lost in the swelling, pressing crowd.**

**Nothing happened that didn' t happen for the rest
of the mob that thronged the Jordan' s bank,
one by one, water and word for each.**

Did anyone notice? Was that a shadow of a passing cloud,
or a dove, or an angel?

Was that a voice or a thunderclap?

Where the world's transformation began was nowhere –
the same obscurity as a meaningless stable, a backwater town,
another execution on the record of a 500 - year - long Empire.

Your baptism, my baptism - just another amongst billions.
Quantity notwithstanding, it changes nature and means everything.

Lord Jesus, you were one with us in our humility
and our humanity.

You walked our walk and lived our life,
as your death was our death - for our death.

Given in thanksgiving for Bessie Lynn, Jessica, Rick and their parents
Florence and Edward Martz and Bessie and Howard Stair by
Edward and Theda Martz

Stitched by Rebecca M. Millar, Jacqueline Rogers, and Jane Geare West

Preaching to Herod

Matthew 14: 3 - 5

Herod the Tetrarch seized John and bound him and put him into prison, for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet.

And what of those who are not born to insignificance –

those who are born to position and power –

those who are gifted in birth by God?

What does God require of the privileged, the rulers, the leaders?

Again and again the same essentials.

That is in His Word - it shouldn't take

a prophet making a house call to communicate this -

but some people are just special.

God gave Herod his life to lead.

His people, oppressed and enslaved could look at one of their own
for a beacon of hope, a light in the darkness, a model of truth and righteousness.

All they could see was Herod.

He took his brother's wife, his sister.

He wanted her daughter, his ward.

Herod had young boys too,

and sweet meats and deep cups and every lust and pleasure.

John had no option but to declare Divine Displeasure.

Lord Jesus, you called us each to the font of baptism
and there you ordained us each for our ministry -
life's greatest privilege.

You created us each with peculiar gifts to fulfill your purpose -
the supreme birthright.

Let us be as you require.

Help us be as you desire.

Let us be your pleasure.

Given in memory of Helen Miller by Jean Miller

Stitched by the Reverend Mary L. Jellison, Jacqueline Rogers, Edith McMannis, Jane Geare West and Rebecca M. Millar

Death of John

Matthew 14: 6 - 12

When Herod's birthday came, Salome the daughter of Herodias danced before the company, and pleased Herod, so he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." And the King was sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given; he sent and had John beheaded in the prison, and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. And John's disciples came and took the body and buried it; and they went and told Jesus.

Was it tragedy? Was it a logical conclusion?

It was tawdry. It was triumphant.

Salome, Herod and Herodias - the incarnations of chaff

winnowed on the threshing floor,

swept onto the trash heap of history,

immortal for their shameless debauchery.

John' s mission was done

the day he baptized the Messiah.

His death was a punctuation -

but a punctuation is a point.

Sometimes a question. Sometimes an ending.

This one an exclamation.

Help us, Lord, to see the purpose,

to know the fulfillment.

In the face of what we all fear most –

the cold and ugly reality of the finality of our mortal existence,

O God of Mercy, O Lover of Souls

help us

to understand our place in the eternal purpose

of life in you.

Given in thanksgiving by Martha Lee Heron

Given in memory of Gertrude Sponseller and Gladys Brooks and in appreciation of Catherine Veasey by Gaylord and Shirley Brooks

Stitched by Donna Martin

The Emmanuel Cross

Emmanuel is a Hebrew word meaning ' God with us.' This Bicentennial Emblem of Emmanuel Parish consists of three symbols: at the center is a cross of lilies which recalls the Virgin Mary and the humanity of Jesus; this is surrounded by a cross of circles, which recalls the divinity of Christ; together, these are within a larger circle which represents the eternal Love of God.

In the Chapel – The People' s Cross

Stitched by Edith Eckhart McMannis

In Memory Of:

Daniel Thomas Brayton

Robert G. Gray

Given By:

Molly Walter- Burnham

Dortha L. Gray & Children

R. Bryon, S. Wayne, Theresa S.

& Nicole Gray, Timothy and Sandra Gray Lease

Edward Jenkins	Edith Jenkins
Eldon Dale Loudermilk	Sarah C. Loudermilk
Ralph Walter Manuel	John D. and Rebecca M. Millar
Francis Nixon Manuel	
Thomas Carskadon Millar	
Sarah McTiernan Millar	
Joseph Pryor	Bonnie Pryor
Florence Pryor	Donald Pryor &
Regina Pryor	Diana Pryor
Pamela Ann Shires	Adele C. Shires &
Dorothy W. Shires	Hugh D. Shires
Frank Stewart	Bonnie Pryor
Audrey Thompson	Guy Thompson
George Wyckoff	Janet Duffus
George Wyckoff	Nicole Gray &
	Dortha Gray
George Wyckoff	John D. and Rebecca M. Millar
George Wyckoff	Wilton J. Young
George Hickle	Dortha Gray & Family
George Hickle	John D. and Rebecca M. Millar
George Hickle	St. Catherine's Circle
Elta Mae Ebert	Robert Little Ebert
Cara Little Ebert	
The Rev. J. Howell Geare	Jane Geare West
Our Parents	Ed and Eleanor Solomon
The Rev. George Alfred Hazen	Catherine Hazen
Jonathan J. Eckhart	Richard & Edith Elvee
Margaret Victoria Pierson	Harold E. Sherman
Ruth Pierson Sherman	
Warren Bantz	Clyde Bantz
Virginia Bantz	
Amelda Light	Karen Soderberg
George Wyckoff	
Phillis Wey Symmonds Riggs	Robert Meldrum Riggs
The Stotler & Poole Families	Mark E. Stotler
St. Catherine's Circle Members	St. Catherine's Circle
Thelma Harriett Allee	Carole R. Allee

Ada Blacke Cureton
Marion Lydia Blacke
Robert Norman Thomas
Raymond Charles Bourdeau
Helen R. Miller
Mary Hack

Thelma Lynn Allee Marshall
Diana Allee Beverlin
Barbara Allee Millholland
Raymond Donald Bourdeau
Norma K. Blacke Bourdeau

Richard B. Arnold

In Thanksgiving For:

Given By:

Gorman Andrew Getty
Erin Elizabeth Getty
Her 90th Birthday
Kayla Marie
Trella Wilcox

W. Edward & Eleanor K Solomon
William Thomas Allee

Clare Josephine Bourdeau

Catherine Brooks

Magdalene House
Needlepoint Stitchers
Ann Thayer Millar

Gorman and Alicelyn Getty

Edith Jenkins
Beverly Wilcox
Bill Keggs
Fred Voss

Elaine K. Solomon
Carole R. Allee
Thelma Lynn Allee Marshall
Diana Allee Beverlin
Barbara Allee Millholland
Raymond Donald Bourdeau
Norma K. Blacke Bourdeau
Shirley Brooks
Gaylord Brooks
Nan Putnam
Rebecca M. Millar
John D. & Rebecca M. Millar

In the Baptistery – The Children's Cross
Stitched by Dortha Gray

In Memory Of:

Given By:

Robert Little Ebert, Jr. (1950 – 1956)

Robert Little Ebert

In Thanksgiving For:

Ericableu Lynn Bartik
Darton Elmore Greist, IV
Megan Juliann Greist
Ethan Andrew Greist
Brent M. Himmler
Aaron M. Himmler
Sarah L. Murphy
Amanda Logan Lease
Nathaniel Cody Lease
Quinn Caitlin Madden
Alexander Chase Millar
Dane Brannon Millar
Douglas Rawlings Millar

Given By:

Catherine Hazen
Darton E. Greist, III &
Kimberly H. Greist
Betty Jo Murphy
Robert and Dortha Gray
Don & Kitty Brickey Madden
John D. & Rebecca M. Millar
Betty A. Brant
Bonnie Pryor
Drs. Magno and Barbara Roque
Janet R. Duffus
Lorin & Patty Emerick
Richard & Edith Elvee
Wendy Snow Walker
Phil & Rosie Schroeder
Nan Putnam
Scott Jamieson Riley

Pamela Fey Moss
Dianne Fey Miltenberger
Suzanne Fey Shipley
Diana Pryor
Donald Pryor
Benjamin Magno Roque
Sarah Boyd Roque
Vincent Anthony Roque
Erin Elizabeth Duffus
Reginald John Duffus
Ross Alan Duffus
Zachariah L. Emerick
Ernest M. Emerick
Leah Rachel Zimmerman
Whitney Snow Walker
Michael Schroeder
Patrick Schroeder
John Schroeder
Christine Schroeder
Ione Putnam
Scott Jamieson Riley, II

Katherine Mary Elizabeth Riley

All Children of Emmanuel

Thomas R. Garland

Sylvia J. Garland

Jessica L. McDonald

Rick & Bessie McDonald

Haley K. McDonald

Naomi Shannon Bragg

Raymond Donald Bourdeau

Simone Siobhan Bragg

Norma Blacke Bourdeau

Isabela Brooks - Vega

Gaylord Brooks

Shirley Brooks

O Prosper Thou

Our Handiwork

The Emmanuel Cross

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Edward C. Chapman asserts the moral right

to be identified as author of these meditations