

THE GOOD NEWS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Goodbye St. George's</i>	2
<i>Baptism</i>	3
<i>What is Advent?</i>	3
<i>Sad Story</i>	4
<i>History of Christmas Carols</i>	4
<i>Angel's Hymn</i>	4
<i>Great Joy</i>	5
<i>Advent & Candles</i>	5
<i>Special Christmas Traditions</i>	6
<i>Holly and Ivy A Poem</i>	6
<i>Tradition: Nativity</i>	7
<i>Foodgrains Bank Update</i>	7
<i>Christmas Service Schedule</i>	7
<i>Foodgrains Bank (cont'd)</i>	8
<i>Prayer</i>	8



Therefore the Lord Himself
will give you a sign: Behold,
a virgin will be with child
and bear a son, and she
will call His name
Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14



RECTOR'S REFLECTION

SUBMITTED BY FATHER JOHN STOPA

Saying goodbye is difficult. It is difficult when you have to say goodbye to friends, and this is what you and I will be doing when I leave the Parish of Fitzroy Harbour as of January 1st, 2023. I will have been with you for nearly five years – my first Sunday here was January 28th, 2018. Over these last few years we have journeyed through many highs and lows; we have experienced many challenges – and throughout it all, we have been reassured of God's presence and goodness.

As I mentioned on the Sunday when the letter from the Bishop was read, November 20th, I feel a little like Moses near the end of his life when God shows him the Promised Land, but tells him he'll never enter it (See Deuteronomy 34:4ff). My journey with you has been to the cusp of a new parish formation – I can see what it looks like, but I won't be the one leading you into that new configuration. With careful discernment, and in talking with Bishop Shane and other friends, it became apparent that my time in your parochial journey was coming to its completion. All things – other than the Divine – have a beginning and an end.

At the end of the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses dies and is buried in the Land of Moab. As we each look to our respective futures, we will not die like Moses does – but that pastoral relationship

between us does die. Out of respect for your new rector, I won't call or visit people in this parish without their permission. This might sound cruel, since over these years we've become friends. However, overarching the friendship is my role as your parish priest – that was first and foremost, and that now comes to an end. We can still exchange the occasional e-mail and, of course, Christmas Cards. ☺

I'd like to leave you with some closing thoughts. As a parish, you are very good at welcoming newcomers, at pastoral care, and at social outreach. It is my sincere hope that you will continue to excel in these areas. This may sound like a contradiction but be proud yet humble in your living out of the Gospel: remember always you are a child of God, redeemed by Christ. Always remember that as God's creation, God's children, we are called to live out the Kingdom of God here on earth. Don't forget to laugh. And know that;



Peace and all Good!
John+

PS. Please consider attending the Advent Mini-Reflection Retreat, which will be held on Saturday, December 17th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Location: your own home, but we'll meet over Zoom. Please register with the Church Office either by phone (613.623.3882 or email: stthomas.stgeorge@outlook.com

Goodbye St. George's

Submitted from St. Thomas' Anglican Church, by Lorraine Madore



Don't cry because it's over;
smile because it happened.

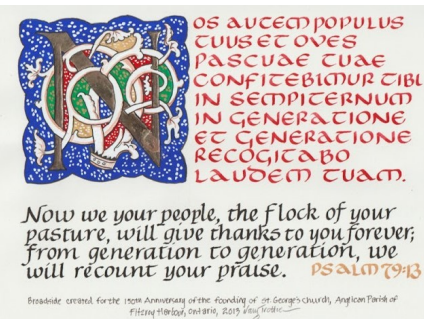
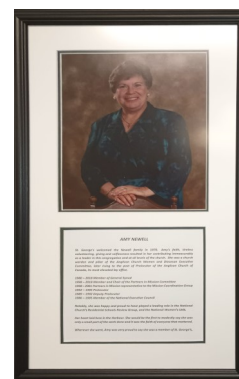


The deconsecration service, held at St. George's on September 18, 2022, was a time to gather with old friends and celebrate God's work in our community and lives over the last 159 years. St. George's oldest and youngest parishioners were pictured together, former priests joined us as we said farewell to the sanctuary; that has seen so many baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals. and to the Amy Newell Hall.

Being true to our Anglican traditions, we enjoyed great music and food. Laurel O'Connor sat at the organ leading us in *Christ is Made the Sure Foundation, How Great Thou Art* and other well-loved hymns. The Parish Choir sang *The Lord Bless You and Keep You*.

It was a moving ceremony, as the alter, lectern and baptismal font had their key elements removed. The time of St. George's the Church had come to an end. But the time has begun for its people to go forward into whatever the Lord has in store.

As Father John wrote:
"Our faith and commitment to God as revealed to us in Jesus Christ remains ever strong. We believe that seeking to disestablish St. George's Church is, in itself, an act of faith. In going through this process and coming to this point where we are saying goodbye to our church, we are acting on faith that God is calling us to something else, something beyond our asking or imagination. Using one of the images from the letters of St. Paul, we have "run the race to the finish". But for us, the end is a new beginning—we will find new church homes and continue to worship there."



Celebrating Baptism

Submitted by Lorraine Madore



St. George's and St. Thomas' were pleased to celebrate five baptisms on a sunny September 11, 2022. We warmly welcomed our newest members:

Aubrey, Everett, Laragh, Piper and Sarah.



"Jesus said, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.' ...

John 3: 5



Yes Jesus loves me
Yes Jesus loves me
Yes Jesus loves me
The Bible tells me so

What is Advent?

By The Ven. Keith Dean-Jones OGS



The word 'Advent' is derived from a Latin word that means 'coming', and it refers to Jesus' 'first coming', as the child of Bethlehem, His 'second coming' at the end of the age, and His many comings in the events of everyday life. Jesus challenges us to be alert, and penitential purple vestments remind us that we are to turn away from distractions and self-indulgence so that we may recognize that He is 'Emmanuel', or 'God with us'. Advent is a season to be awake to the presence of our Lord and to repent of self-absorption.

I regard the Liturgy as a 'blue-print' for Christian spirituality. In the western Church, there are four occasions at Mass when

the priest greets the congregation with the salutation, "The Lord be with you". It is a phrase that first appears in the Old Testament and is Boaz's greeting to his barley reapers (Ruth 2:4). In Christian liturgical theology, the phrase indicates the presence of Jesus, and traditionally it is used to welcome the people when they assemble for worship, during the reading of the Holy Scriptures, at the beginning of the Eucharistic prayer and as a preface to the blessing of the people at the end of the service. The salutation works a bit like traffic lights, and it indicates that it is Jesus who gathers us together, who speaks to us in His Word, who sustains us with the Eucharistic meal and who sends us out as instruments of His compassion, reconciliation and peace.

It is the salutation before the blessing of the people that interests me, and although it is not prescribed for use in most Anglican rites, its use can help us to

understand the meaning of ministry. The blessing is not a topping up of the tank of Grace just in case some may have evaporated between communion and the end of the service. Rather, it is an affirmation that we will meet Jesus when we are sent into the world.

I think that the 'real presence' of Jesus that we experience in our own lives, and the 'real presence' that we experience in gathering, Word and sacrament, is a 'real presence' when we minister in His name. Jesus wants us to gather before we are scattered, to listen to Him before we speak, to receive from Him before we give, and to meet Him when we care for friends and neighbours.



First Sunday in Advent

God of peace, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; so that on the last day, when your Son Jesus shall come again to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to eternal life; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

FWM Proposed Collects (2004)



For to us a child is born, To us a son is given, And the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Now we watch for the day when he will come again in power and great triumph to judge this world; that we, without shame or fear, may rejoice to behold his appearing.

The Book of Alternative Services, p. 252

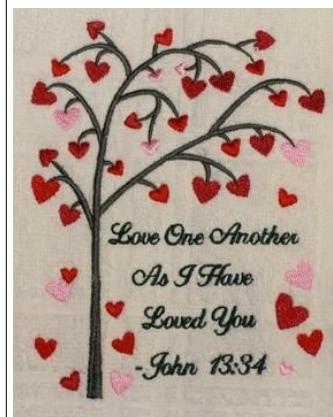
Though This is a Sad Story It is a Story of Pastoral Care

Submitted by Father John Stopa

"Milly (the dog on the stretcher), is a victim of neglect that has turned into an absolute nightmare. Milly was ridiculed by painting her, then tied up and dragged behind a car and finally, they weren't happy they shot her. While lying traumatized on the vet's bed, a Border Collie, who is also a victim of abuse, approached surprising everyone with a gesture of great tenderness. She didn't leave Milly alone for a minute making her feel her support."



**If we all had the hearts of animals, the world would forever change.
May we never lose our heart filled with his peace, love and tenderness.**



"The merry family gatherings-The old, the very young; The strangely lovely way they Harmonize in carols sung.

The History of Christmas Carols

Submitted by Lorraine Madore source: TheHistoryofChristmasCarols-WhyChristmas.com



Carols were first sung in Europe thousands of years ago-pre-Christian songs, sung at the Winter Solstice celebrations. Carols used to be written and sung during all four seasons, but only the tradition of singing them at Christmas has really survived.

Christmas, remembering the birth of Jesus, then started to be celebrated at the same time as the solstice, so early Christians started singing Christian songs instead of pre-Christian ones. In 129 ad Telesphous, a Bishop of Rome, ordained that, "In the Holy Night of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior," all shall solemnly sing the "Angel's Hymn." With that proclamation the 'Angels Hymn' became the first Christmas hymn of the Christian church. Soon after, many composers all over Europe started to

write Christmas carols. However, not many people liked them as they were all written and sung in Latin and most people could not understand them. By the time of the Middle Ages, most people had lost interest in celebrating Christmas.



This changed in 1223, when St. Francis of Assisi started his Nativity plays in Italy. People in the plays sang songs or canticles that told stories. Some of the choruses were in a language that people could understand and join in. The carols spread across Europe.

When the Puritans came to power in England in the 1640s, the celebration of Christmas and the

singing of carols was stopped. The carols survived as people sang them in secret. They were largely unsung until the Victorian Age, when old Christmas music was collected from Villages in England - the carols were sung as told songs in pubs and were not thought of as proper by the upper classes.

Before carol singing in churches became popular, there were official carol singers called "Waits". They were called Waits because then sang on Christmas Eve, known then as waitnight because of the shepherds watching their sheep when the angels appeared. At this time orchestras and choirs began to be set up and people wanted to sing Christmas songs. So carols once again became popular in churches as well as concert halls.



Angel's Hymn

Angels we have heard on high
Singing sweetly o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be,
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, Desire of nations, bind,
in one the hearts of humankind;
O bid our bitter conflict cease,
And be for us our Prince of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel



Second Sunday in Advent

God of justice, clear our lives
of hatred and despair and
sow in us seeds of joy and
peace; so that shoots of
hope may spring forth in us
as we await the coming of
the Christ, who with you and
the Holy Spirit, lives and
reigns, one God, now and for
ever. **Amen.**

FWM Proposed Collects
(2004) alt.



Advent is a Christian season of preparation for the Nativity of Christ at Christmas. It is the beginning of the liturgical year in Western Christianity.

The season of Advent in the Christian calendar anticipates the "coming of Christ" from three different perspectives: the physical nativity in Bethlehem, the reception of Christ in the heart of the believer, and the eschatological Second Coming.

Practices associated with Advent include Advent calendars, lighting an Advent wreath, praying an Advent daily devotional, erecting a Christmas tree, lighting a Christingle



(A Christingle is a strange-looking object. Consisting of an orange impaled by a candle and cocktail sticks, topped with candy, representing Christ Child mainly used for children services),

Another way of preparing for Christmas, is setting up Christmas decorations, a custom that is sometimes done liturgically through a hanging of the greens ceremony.

Advent: Good News of Great JOY

Advent: Good News of Great JOY – Wandering Way (alongthewanderingway.com)

What have you been waiting for in your life? Perhaps you've been waiting for weeks, months, years over something in your life and you need God to burst forth with a proclamation of Joy? Or perhaps you find yourself feeling as if your life is mundane and lacking purpose.

The shepherds were an unsuspecting people. As part of the Israelite community, they were in waiting for their savior, but they also were simply living their normal non-eventful life of caring for sheep. Take a moment to imagine yourself as a shepherd in the fields at night among the baa-ing sheep.

Now consider your daily routine. How would you have responded to this site, these emotions, this message had it been revealed to you as you sat at your office desk, were driving to the grocery store, in the middle of a staff meeting or watching tv? Would this message have brought you joy? Why or why not?

The gift of Great Joy proclaimed that night by the Angels was not only for the shepherds. This Joy is still proclaimed today for all peoples. It does not discriminate or come with limits. It should indeed give us pause to rejoice for it is shocking that God himself would become a weak and frail baby and live a lowly human existence

because of his Great Love for His creation. This long-awaited baby is our Great Joy for He is God and He is our only Hope for Peace, Love, and Salvation. ***The proclamation of Joy is the end of our waiting.***

As we continue in the advent season remember what great Joy God's proclaimed to you throughout the year. If you are still lying in wait for something, how can you turn your sorrow and frustrations toward an anticipation for future joy? God has not forgotten you in your waiting. He's faithful to fulfill his promises. Can you trust that a proclamation of Joy is yet to come?



Joy

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."

Romans 15:13



Peace:

"I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety."

Psalm 4:8



Hope

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"

Jeremiah 29:11



Love

"Do everything in love."

1 Corinthians 16:14

Advent and Candles

There are different ways that candles are used in Advent to mark the run into Christmas.

One way is to have a long candle and mark out 24 lines, all an equal distance from each other. Each evening the candle is burnt from one line to the next. The final part of the candle is lit and used up on Christmas.

Another main way of using Advent candles is to have five candles. On the first Sunday in ad-



vent a single candle is lit, the second week two are lit, until Christmas Day when all five are lit.

Different denominations attach different meanings to each candle. Here is one thought.

The first candle—the Old Testament prophets that predicted the coming of Jesus.

The second candle—the Holy Bible

The third candle—Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The fourth candle—John the Baptist, who prepared the world for the coming of Jesus.

The final candle—Jesus himself. The candle is symbolic of Jesus being the light of the world.



Third Sunday in Advent

God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Common Worship: Additional Collects (2004) alt.



*The Holly
& The Ivy*

The Holly and the Ivy
when they are both full
grown, of all the trees that
are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.

The rising of the sun,
and the running of the deer,
the playing of the merry
organ, sweet singing in the
choir.

The holly bears a
blossom, as white as the lily
flower, and Mary bore sweet
Jesus Christ,
to be our sweet Saviour.

The holly bears a berry,
as red as any blood, and
Mary bore sweet Jesus
Christ to do us sinners
good.

The holly bears a prickly, as
sharp as any thorn, and
Mary bore sweet Jesus
Christ on Christmas Day in
the morn.

The holly bears a bark, as
bitter as any gall, and Mary
bore sweet Jesus Christ for
to redeem us all.



Advent

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Shepherd of Israel,
who by a dream guided
your servant Joseph to
embrace your promise of
salvation: lead us in the
way of grace and peace, so
that we may bear your
promise into the world;
through Jesus Christ our
Lord, who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spir-
it, one God, now and for
ever. Amen.

F WM Proposed Prayers (2004)

Special Christmas Traditions

submitted by Lorraine Madore Source: [Christmas traditions: 16 festive rituals and why we celebrate](#) | [Homes & Gardens \(homesandgardens.com\)](#)

We all have our favourite Christmas traditions, from decades-old recipes to special decorations. And don't forget the battered Perry Como Christmas album! Here are a few:



Red, Gold and Green.

Why these three colours? Red suggests the blood of Christ, gold is one of the gifts from the Three Kings, and green is the symbol of everlasting life.



The Christmas Tree.

Pagans used branches of evergreens to decorate their homes during the winter solstice, as it made them think of the spring to come, Christmas tree ideas became popular in the UK when Queen Victoria's husband Prince Albert brought one over from Germany in 1841 and placed it in Windsor Castle.



Christmas Stockings.

St. Nicholas is said to have wanted to help a poor family who had three daughters, all in need of a dowry before they could marry. To give charity without injuring their pride, he threw gold coins down their chimney on Christmas Eve – and the coins fell in to a stocking that was hanging in the fireplace to dry.



Christmas Crackers.

Christmas crackers were invented by Thomas Smith, a London sweet maker, in 1846, who was inspired by French bonbons. He added a love motto to his wrapped sweets. Then to add an extra surprise, he included a strip of paper laced with chemicals that would crack when the twist was opened. Over time, the size of crackers increased and he replaced the sweets with a small gift.



Mince Meat Pies.

Mince pies were originally filled with meat as well as dried fruit and spices. According to tradition, they were brought to Britain in the 13th-

Century by returning Crusaders who'd enjoyed Middle Eastern dishes combining meat, fruit and spices. Often called Christmas pies, they were first oval shaped to represent Jesus' manger. The meat has since been left out, but the three spices retained: cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg which represent the three wise men.



Holly and the Ivy.

Holly was once accepted as protection against witches and pagans. It's thorns and berries represent the thorns worn by Jesus on the Cross and the blood that he shed for us. Ivy has heart-shaped leaves, symbolizing Jesus' birth.

Do you have any family traditions?

On Christmas eve we receive new pajamas. They just appear under the tree.

We have a birthday cake for Jesus and sing Happy Birthday Christmas Eve.

Always attend a church service and then have a buffet,

We always have a cookie baking day with all children.

Decorate tree together.

A new tree ornament every year

Special Traditions (cont'd)



The Nativity

It's called the Nativity, the Creche, the Jesus-in-the-manger scene, and more depending on your history and tradition. It shows up under Christmas trees, by alters, on front lawns and roofs, and on computer screens. And it can be made out of wood, plastic, paper, tinfoil and anything else. But the elements are the same—new borne Jesus in a manger, watched over by his parents Mary and Joseph. They may be pictures in a stable with animals. Sometimes there are shepherds, a great star and angel, and even three wise men with gifts. Here is a bit of background and meaning, thanks to Wikipedia and the Internet.



The tradition of a donkey and ox in the scene may be an allusion to Isaiah 1:3: "The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger." There is some indication that the ox represents patience, the nation of Israel and sacrificial worship. The donkey repre-

sents humility, readiness to serve.



The Angel and shepherds are straight from Luke 2:8-12, 15: "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to the, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in stripes of cloth and lying in a manger. [...] So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in a manger."

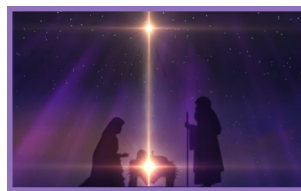


The timing, and maybe even the setting, is a bit off for the Wise Men and in some tradi-

tions they are placed in the Nativity only after Christmas (In much the same way, baby Jesus does not come until Christmas morning in our household) Matthew 2:9-11 reads: "[The Magi] went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and



presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh."



The whole story of Jesus' birth is in that scene. The reason for Christmas is clear.

The Son of God became a man to enable men to become the sons of God.

C.S. Lewis

Foodgrains Bank Update

Submitted by Gary Weir



This past year, 2022, our Parish once again contributed to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank as part of our outreach.

Fourteen acres of soybeans was harvested on October 16th. Harvest was a slightly above average.

The amount to be sent to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank is 11,513.87. This includes donations from Christ Church, Bells Corners; and St. John's, Kanata and donations from our Parish members.

Keep in mind that the monies can be matched up to 4X by the Federal Government. The matching by government funds is renegotiated periodically between the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and the federal government.

Our growing project has a new look. A new sign paid for by the Foodgrains Bank was installed this year. Ontario Foodgrains is working towards universal signage for all growing projects in Ontario. Our generous sponsors are still listed.

(cont'd page 8)



Christmas at Midnight

Eternal God who made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of your one true light: bring us, who know the revelation of that light on earth, to see the radiance of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Common Worship (2000)

Parish of Fitzroy Harbour

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twitter feed
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facebook.com/stthomaswoodlawn



Artist Gary Weir



A Merry Christmas to all:



Christmas Service Schedule

First Sunday of Advent~ November 27

Second Sunday of Advent~ December 4

Third Sunday of Advent - December 11, 10:00 am

- - Fourth Sunday of Advent~ December 18, 10:00 am

Christmas Eve~ December 24,, 7:00 pm

Christmas Day~ Sunday December 25, 10:00 am

First Sunday of Christmas~ January 1, 10:00 am

Last Sunday Father John Stopa presiding

Second Sunday of Christmas~ January 8, 10:00 am

The Right Reverend Dr. Shane A. D. Parker

Bishop of Ottawa presiding

FOODGRAINS UPDATE BANK_(CONT'D)

submitted by Gary Weir

All proceeds that our Parish sends is designated to Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF)

Presently, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank have great concerns with hunger issues, climate issues, political

and war unrest in the Horn of Africa.

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank are also providing humanitarian assistance in the Ukraine, and have grave concerns from the effects of this war on the Ukrainian

people and on global hunger in areas such as the Horn of Africa.

This is one small way that our Parish can contribute to working together to end global hunger.

PRAYER

submitted by Father John Stopa

Over the past 4 years. I have provided prayers at the end of each newsletter that reflect the season or the times. I leave you with one of my favourite from the Book of Common Prayer, the General Intercession, which covers all needs, wants and hopes. If you're stuck for something to pray, use this. J+

Be mindful, O Lord, of thy people bowed before thee, and of those who are absent through age, sickness, or infirmity. Care for the infants, guide the young, support the aged, encourage the faint-hearted, collect the scattered, and bring the wandering to thy fold. Travel with the voyagers, defend the widows, shield the orphans, deliver the captives, heal the sick. Succour all who are in tribulation, necessity, or distress.

Remember for good all those that love us, and those that hate us, and those that have desired us, unworthy as we are, to pray for them. And those whom we have forgotten, do thou, O Lord, remember. For thou art the Helper of the helpless, the Saviour of the lost, the Refuge of the wanderer, the Healer of the sick. Thou, who knowest each person's need, and hast heard their prayer, grant unto each according to thy merciful loving-kindness and thy eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.