



Liturgy of Christian Burial

✠ John Burch Stevens, Sr.
June 9, 1927 - December 10, 2019

Monday, December 16, 2019 11:00 a.m.
St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica
Beaumont, Texas
Reverend Monsignor Jeremiah J. McGrath



“Never let anything so fill you with sorrow that you forget the joy of the resurrection.”

Mother Teresa

Gathering Rites

Reception at the Cathedral Door

John was baptized in Christ. His body is now received at the door of the Cathedral, sprinkled with holy water and covered with the white pall as a reminder of his baptism.

We pray that as John died and rose with Christ, that he may now be clothed in the radiance of Christ's eternal glory.

Procession

Gathering Hymn

On Eagle's Wings

Refrain

And he will raise you up on ea - gle's wings, bear you on the
breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and
hold you in the palm of his hand.

After last refrain

And hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand.

The image shows the musical notation for the hymn 'On Eagle's Wings'. It is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are printed below the notes. The first line is labeled 'Refrain'. The second line is labeled 'After last refrain'. The music consists of four staves of notes, each corresponding to a line of lyrics. The notes are mostly quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. The lyrics are: 'And he will raise you up on ea - gle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand.' The final line of the hymn is 'And hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand.'

Opening Prayer



Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Daniel 12:1-3

Responsorial Psalm

Shepherd Me O God- Psalm 23

Refrain



Second Reading

Romans 5:5-11

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

John 1:1-9

Homily

Prayer of the Faithful



Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

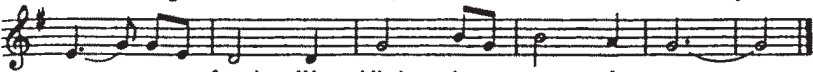
Amazing Grace



1. A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound, That
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And
3. The Lord has prom - ised good to me, His
4. Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
5. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, Bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
word my hope se - cures; He will my shield and
have al - read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to



now am found, Was blind, but now I see.
grace ap - pear The hour I first be - lieved!
por - tion be As long as life en - dures.
safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.
sing God's praise Than when we'd first be - gun.

Text: St. 1-4, John Newton, 1725-1807, St. 5, Ascd. to John Rens, fl. 1859
Tune: NEW BRITAIN, CM, Virginia Harmonic, 1831, Harm. by John Barnard, b. 1918, c. 1962, Hope Publishing Co.

Preface Acclamation (Holy, Holy, Holy)

Memorial Acclamation

Great Amen

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

Sign of Peace

Breaking of the Bread Litany (Lamb of God)

Reception of Holy Communion

For Catholics: *As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity of confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible. (Code of Canon Law, Canon 916). A frequent reception of the sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.*

For other Christians: *We welcome all Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common Baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions that separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they all may be one" (John 17:21). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own churches. According to the Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of Holy Communion by Christians of these churches. (Canon 844§3).*

Canon law provides Eucharistic sharing by other Christians who do not have full communion with the Catholic Church only when the diocesan bishop deems there is an exceptional circumstance and the following conditions are present: the other Christian on their own asks for the sacrament, they manifest a Catholic faith in the sacrament, are properly disposed and cannot approach a minister of their own community (Canon 844§4).

For non-Christians: *We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. We have high regard for their traditions, friendship, and join them in promoting unity among all peoples. It is our joy to unite with them in praying for the peace and unity of the human family while respecting our common traditions, which do not include Eucharist sharing.*

For all not receiving Communion: *All who are not receiving Holy Communion are invited to express their prayerful desire for unity with God and with one another by approaching the altar at communion time with their hands crossed over their hearts. The minister will pray for this unity at the front of the Cathedral with all those in the communion line who have their hands crossed over their hearts.*

Communion Hymn

Taste and See

Refrain



The musical notation is written on three staves in a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and repetitive, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Taste and see, taste and see the good - ness
of the Lord. O taste and see, taste and
see the good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord.

Meditation Hymn

Ave Maria

Prayer after Communion

Final Commendation

Invitation to Prayer

Song of Farewell

Gently, legato (♩ = 74–80)

mp

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Gently, legato (♩ = 74–80)' and the initial dynamic is 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases ending in a fermata. The lyrics are written below the staff, aligned with the notes. The score includes a dynamic change to 'mf' (mezzo-forte) in the fourth line. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

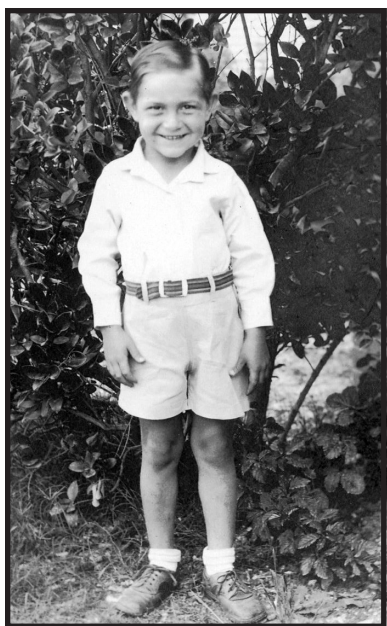
May songs of the an - gels wel - come you and
guide you a - long your way. — May the
smiles of the mar - tyrs greet your own as
dark - ness turns in-to day. — *mf* Ev - 'ry fear will
mp be un - done and death will be no
more, — as songs of the an - gels
bring you home be - fore the face of God. —

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Prayer of Commendation

Song of Commendation

Songs of the Angels



John Burch Stevens Sr.

was born on June 9, 1927, in Port Arthur, Texas. He was the youngest of nine children born to Simon Adam Stevens and Ociana Marie Trimble Stevens, both native of Jeanerette, Louisiana.

Stevens grew up in Port Arthur and graduated from Port Arthur Thomas Jefferson High School in 1945, where he was a cheerleader. He immediately joined the United States Navy at 17 years of age. He was stationed in San Diego, California, where he achieved the rank of Seaman 1st Class and was appointed Platoon Commander. He was honorably discharged on August 2, 1946.

John Stevens returned to Southeast Texas and entered Lamar Tech College majoring in Speech and Drama, and again became a cheerleader. He acted and sang in numerous college and theatre plays and musicals.

In 1947, Stevens began working in radio, broadcasting sports events, including Texas League Baseball, with Les Ledet for KPAC Radio in Port Arthur. Stevens recalled that he and Ledet would receive teletype updates of baseball games and improvise the game broadcast using their own sound effects. Stevens also sold cars (Lincoln, Mercury and Studebaker), office equipment, and advertising.

He married Nell Donnelly, of Port Arthur, in 1951, and they would have five children - John, Jr., Cynthia, Thomas, Philip, and Lauren. He resided in Port Arthur, Groves, Beaumont, China, and Nederland.

On April 2, 1957, Stevens was traveling and while at Dallas Love Field he witnessed the famous Dallas tornado which traveled from Oak Cliff to Love Field, killing 10 people. He called into KPAC Radio and broadcasted a dramatic live report of the natural disaster as the tornado headed toward him. KPAC immediately hired him to perform news, disk jockeying, and selling advertising. He pioneered the "Night Rider" radio program, calling himself "Cactus Jack Crash." Stevens worked with famous radio celebrities and friends such as Gordon Baxter, Henry Larcade, George Crouchet, Steve O'Donahoe, and Jiles Perry Richardson known as "The

Big Bopper.” He also would work at KPNG Radio in Port Neches.

On June 27, 1957, Hurricane Audrey became a major hurricane, striking the Gulf Coast just west of Cameron, Louisiana, with 125 mile per hour winds. Cameron had a population of 3,000 at the time of Audrey. Hurricane Audrey would wipe out Cameron and kill over 500 people, with almost 200 persons never found. Most of the victims succumbed due to the dramatic 12 foot storm surge.

Shortly after the storm passed, John Stevens learned that a tugboat was headed from Port Arthur to Cameron with medical personnel and supplies to help victims of the storm. Stevens talked his way on board. They were some of the first responders to reach Cameron as the roads to Cameron were impassible. They tied the vessel to the city courthouse, the only building remaining.

Stevens remembered seeing bodies floating where the town of Cameron had once been. While the medical personnel attended to the victims, Stevens accessed a ship-to-shore radio and began reporting the events to KPAC Radio, which in turn relayed the news of the disaster to the world. It was the first on-site information of the catastrophe, preceding other reporters who were waiting for the roads to clear to get to Cameron.

In 1957, the NBC affiliate, KPAC Channel 4 television, began as Southeast Texas’ second national television affiliate. Channel 6, KFDM, the CBS affiliate in Beaumont had begun in 1955. Stevens would soon join Channel 4 as a staff announcer and weather news reporter.

In January 1958, James Arness, the star of the hit television show “Gunsmoke,” came to Beaumont to support the March of Dimes telethon. Stevens met Arness and the other Gunsmoke stars at the Red Carpet Inn in Beaumont. Arness had an idea of holding a live televised shootout similar to the Gunsmoke show’s introduction. No one stepped



forward to volunteer for the duel, except John Stevens. "I'll do it," he solitarily volunteered. John Stevens, Jr., was 5 years old at the time but remembered watching his father practice drawing his Colt .45 pistol from his holster in front of his parent's bedroom mirror the evening before the planned "shootout."

The next day, anyone who had a television in Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana watched the duel between John Stevens and Marshal Dillon. As Stevens recalled, he couldn't pull his pistol out of his holster fast enough before Arness shot at him with blank bullets. Stevens tells the story that even though he woefully failed to match the drawing speed of Marshal Dillon, he could at least act out the part of a western shootout loser. James Arness would laughingly recall he had never seen someone more dramatically flop around the ground acting as though he had been shot. Stevens was very fond of James Arness and the other Gunsmoke actors who visited Beaumont, who he considered very professional and unpretentious.

About this time, John Stevens met John Garner. Garner had come to Port Arthur to assist in the launching of KPAC-Channel 4 television. Garner had been in television at an Arkansas station and hosted a popular children's program featuring his "Cowboy John" character, along with a sidekick who played a clown. Garner, impressed with Stevens' performance with James Arness, related to Stevens that his clown sidekick had suddenly left town and Garner needed a new partner. Stevens said he was interested but he would never play a clown.



They came up with a masterful plan of John Garner playing the "Good Guy" and John Stevens as the mischievous nemesis "Black Bart." Thus, began one of the most memorable entertainment duos in Southeast Texas history. They performed together from 1958 until the 1970's. Every child wished to appear on the daily afternoon Circle 4 Club television show. During the program, each child would be interviewed by Cowboy John and Black Bart on live television where almost anything could

happen....and did. As famously reported on NBC's nightly nationwide Huntley Brinkley Report the evening after an embarrassingly funny event occurred on the Circle 4 Club show, "Goodnight Leroy, wherever you are."

Cowboy John and Black Bart became a top act performing their slapstick Good Guy-Bad Guy routine at rodeos, business openings, and major events. They also worked regularly with talented entertainers such as Harold "Red" Ransonette

who played the beloved "Jingles the Clown," and the renowned parachutist Stephen "Skippy" Mannino. John Garner and John Stevens and their Cowboy John and Black Bart characters are represented in the archives of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

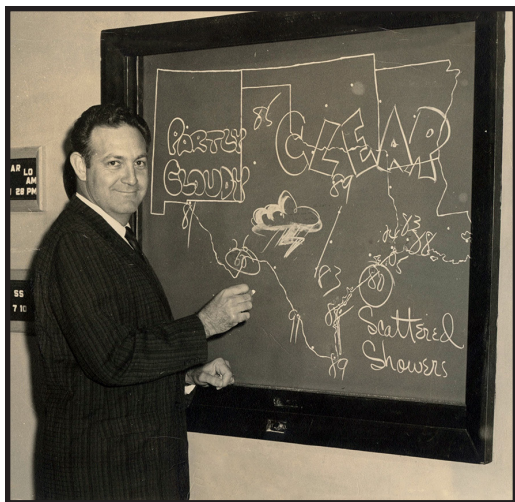


An interesting story is told that John Garner and John Stevens were performing at a rodeo in Louisiana in the 60's. A renowned rodeo clown was also performing at the rodeo and apparently became friends with Garner and Stevens. This rodeo clown had a particular act involving the use of skunks in his program. After the rodeo, the rodeo clown told Garner and Stevens that one of his skunks gave birth to baby skunks and he wanted to give them to his new friends. Stevens readily accepted and placed them in a bag, and they headed home.

As they came into Beaumont, Garner and Stevens decided to stop to eat at Vic and Al's Italian restaurant. Owners Vic, Al, and Ralph Patrizi were great friends of Stevens and Garner and urged them to visit the restaurant anytime, especially if they were playing Cowboy John and Black Bart. Stevens and Garner stealthily brought the bag of baby skunks in to keep a watch on them. How it happened, nobody is willing to admit, but the baby skunks got loose and scampered about the restaurant, sending patrons fleeing in all directions.

The Patrizi brothers, although good friends with Garner and Stevens, were not amused. It took a while before all the skunks were herded from within

the restaurant. Fortunately, baby skunks are unable to emit their defensive musk odor until about one month old. However, most people don't wait to find out the age of a skunk before fleeing an encounter. It also took a while before the Patrizi's invited Cowboy John and Black Bart back to the restaurant.



While at Channel 4 television, Stevens became good friends with celebrated entertainer Tommy Vance and they would host the popular television dance program "Jive at Five." Similar to "American Bandstand," "Jive at Five" featured local teenagers dancing to popular songs. Stevens also worked the weather forecasting with top newscaster Ralph Ramos and sports reporter "Frenchy" Domingue. Stevens' artistic talent was important as prior to modern electronic graphics, early television weather maps were hand drawn by the forecasters. During his television career, John Stevens would work with many celebrities including Joan Crawford, Eddie Arnold, and Anita Bryant.

During the 50's and 60's, John Stevens was also very active in community affairs, participating in Beaumont Community Players and Port Arthur Little Theatre productions. He was an officer with Beaumont Junior Chamber of Commerce and active in the Groves Rotary Club. He was also President of the Salvation Army in South Jefferson County.

In 1967, Stevens became Vice President of First State Bank of Groves, which later became First Bank and Trust. He would star in television commercials for the bank, playing different characters including the loveable "Granny Groves." In 1979, Stevens started his own advertising and public relations company in association with Vance Matthews Advertising. He later accepted employment with the Texas Department of Human Services and headed the Beaumont Division's Medicaid Eligibility Public Affairs Department.

In 1986, Stevens also began a lengthy relationship with Lamar University's KVLU Public Radio. For over 20 years, he volunteered his talents to his

alma mater Lamar University by hosting a variety of musical programs including the popular “Juke Box Saturday Night,” “At the Hop,” and “Big Band Danceland.” Stevens hosted the broadcasting of the “100th Anniversary of Spindletop of Gladys City,” “Jimmy Simmons Big Band Show at Antones,” “Jimmy Simmons and Friends at McDonald Gym,” and “Jimmy Simmons and Friends Encore at the Montagne Center.”

More recently, for several years, John Stevens announced for Britt Godwin’s Big Band concerts as he would emulate old time radio programs. Stevens acquired a phenomenal knowledge of the history of the Big Band Era Music. His favorite Big Band entertainer was Beaumont’s Harry James, who played with the Benny Goodman Band before forming his own band in 1939, featuring a young and upcoming vocalist, Frank Sinatra.

John Stevens Sr. was happiest entertaining others, especially children and music lovers. In 2012, Lamar University presented John Stevens with a formal Resolution, recognizing Stevens for his dedication of time and efforts to Lamar and Southeast Texas. Then Lamar President James Simmons stated in the Resolution that John Stevens Sr. is “A Southeast Texas Treasure, whose contributions to Southeast Texas have been immeasurable – to Lamar University, the business community, non-profit organizations and musical devotees, sports fans, and in the early days, to children who thrilled to his television persona.”

John Stevens Sr. passed away on December 10, 2019, at the age of 92.

Survivors include his children, Judge John B. Stevens, Jr. and his wife, Marcia, of Beaumont; Cynthia M. Stevens, of Humble; Thomas M. Stevens and his wife, Gay, of Groves; Phillip B. Stevens, of Keller; and Lauren Stevens Blackburn and her husband, Kenny; grandchildren, Jason M.



Stevens (Maureen); Kelley Stevens Frioux (Landon); Kara Stevens Hawthorn (Zack); Alison N. Stevens (Stephen); Joshua A. Stevens; Marissa F. Stevens-Bass (Erin); Taryn S. Kelley (Andrew); Alexia Sanders; and Brady Blackburn;

great-grandchildren, Logan, Kolin, and Roman Frioux; Simon Stevens; Columbus, Miller, and Everette Hawthorn; Brailyn, Kailix, and Deklan Kelley; and longtime companion, Kathy Crawford.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to Lucas Place Assisted Living, Summer Place Nursing Home, Heart to Heart Hospice, Dr. Muhammad Aziz, and Dr. Dia Abochamh for the great care and compassion that was shown to Mr. Stevens during his illness.









To Glen Stevens from your friend
 J. Arnold, M.C.
 4 FEB 69 9TH DIST TEXAS



To Johnny Bear
 Bear Puller









Celebrant
Homilist
Presiding
Placing the Pall
Gift Bearers

Reverend Monsignor Jeremiah J. McGrath
Reverend David Edwards
Most Reverend Curtis J. Guillory, S.V.D., D.D.
John Jr, Cynthia, Thomas, Philip, Lauren
Kara Ociana Stevens Hawthorn
Kelley Michelle Frioux
Provided by St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica School
Alison Nicole Stevens, Amy Caroline Blanding
Abigail Dueppen
Paul Holliday
His Family

Servers
Lectors
Cantor
Organist
Pallbearers



Committal

Broussard's Crematorium
Beaumont, Texas

Memorial Contributions

KVLU Public Radio
Lamar University
P.O. Box 10064
Beaumont, Texas 77710

*There will be a post service gathering to follow at
The Laurels, 1315 Calder Avenue, Beaumont.*



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Saint Anthony Cathedral Basilica Mission Statement

*"A caring Catholic community celebrating and sacrificially sharing God's love with all peoples
through spirituality, scripture, sacrament, stewardship, study and service."*

Broussards
Established 1889

Please sign Mr. Stevens' guest book and share your memories at
www.broussards1889.com