

Enter Barbara Clementine Harris into The Church Calendar

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RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont submit the following resolution to the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church meeting in 2022:

RESOLVED, the House of _____ concurring, That the 80th General Convention include and enter Barbara Clementine Harris, Bishop, to the Calendar of the Church year to be celebrated on March 13.

EXPLANATION

Barbara Clementine Harris (June 12, 1930 - March 13, 2020) was the first woman to be ordained a bishop in the Episcopal Church of the United States and the worldwide Anglican Communion. Throughout the Church, Bishop Harris was a courageous pioneer, an outspoken prophet, and an unwavering champion of God's justice and witness to God's grace. For many decades church gatherings were enlivened by her keen wit, consummate storytelling, and improvised musical accompaniment.

As an African-American and a woman, Barbara Harris was a champion of the full inclusion of all the baptized into all corners and levels of the Church. She was Crucifer at the ordination of the first women ordained to the priesthood, "The Philadelphia 11," at Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia. Bishop Harris pressed for the integration of historically segregated parishes. In 1968, She was an early member of the Union of Black Episcopalians, founded in 1968, and called for more significant numbers of women in the clergy. Her support of LGBTQ persons paved the way for the 2003 election and consecration of Bishop V. Gene Robinson as the first openly gay bishop in the Church. Since then, several other gay men and women have been elevated to the episcopate.

Barbara Harris was ordained a priest in 1980, and much of her exemplary reputation in the Church in the 1980s was based on her work as a public theologian writing in *The Witness*, a venerable Episcopal journal she served as an editor, writer, and publisher. Her columns under the title "A Luta Continua" were splendidly prophetic.

By the summer of 2022, our diocese, and several other dioceses, will have had two years of local commemorations on March 13. These commemorations can lay the foundation for Church-wide observance. The Church has often found delight through the faithful recollection with gratitude the lives of those in whom Christ's love has been manifest. We commemorate their lives for the inspiration and strength, which we derive from their witness. We turn to them also as continuing companions in the Spirit, forebears of whose love and prayers we remain assured. It is in that Spirit that the Diocese of Vermont offers this resolution.