

Anne Wilson Robbins

January 13, 1931 - March 23, 2022

The Rev. Canon Anne Wilson Robbins, 91 years old, entered into the nearer presence of God on March 23, 2022, after a short illness.

Anne Ballou Wilson was born in 1931 to Everett Wilson and Bernice Beckman Wilson. Everett sampled a number of vocations in the depth of the Depression, finally settling the family in Chevy Chase, Maryland where he worked as a journalist and lobbyist. In his spare time, he wrote delightful books about Americana that showcased his skills as a photographer.

Anne graduated from National Cathedral School in Washington, DC. Then, following the footsteps of her mother and aunts, she studied at Wells College in upstate New York, receiving her degree Phi Beta Kappa in art history in 1953. A blind date introduced her to a dashing Naval Academy midshipman, Richard (Dick) Robbins, during their senior years. They married just after graduation and had 68 happy years together.

Dick wanted to be fighter pilot, so he joined the newly formed Air Force. For 20 years, the couple went where Uncle Sam told them to go. Along the way, they welcomed daughters Becky Robbins-Penniman of Bonita Springs and Debbie Robbins Schwarzer of Los Altos, California. Anne took advantage of postings all over the United States as well as Okinawa and Madrid to learn more about local art and culture, helping her girls learn to appreciate the

diversity of human life on Earth. In Madrid, she earned a Master's degree in education from an extension program run by the University of Southern California, which qualified her to teach art history in a high school in Illinois while Dick served his second tour Vietnam. Upon his return, Dick was posted to Wright Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, and the family settled in Centerville, Ohio.

In addition to making a lovely home, Anne volunteered widely wherever they lived, including with the Officers Wives Clubs, Air Force Family Services, the Dayton Art Institute, and as an ombudsman for patients at nursing homes. Of course, she was always active in her local Episcopal congregation. She entered the paid workforce in the early 1970s, serving as a tour manager for company that arranged award travel for businesses' employees all over the Western Hemisphere.

From the time the family settled in Centerville, Anne served the Diocese of Southern Ohio faithfully as a layperson. While a member of St. George's Episcopal Church in Washington Township, Ohio, Anne served the parish in many capacities. When the Rev. John McGill Krum became the Bishop of Southern Ohio in 1971, his firm advocacy for equal rights opened up many new avenues for women to serve as laypeople. Anne was a delegate to many diocesan conventions and was elected to the Diocese's Standing Committee. Although Bishop Krum's resolution to authorize the ordination of women was turned down at the 64th General Convention in 1973, approval was finally obtained at the next General Convention in 1976. Even though he was set to retire in 1980, Bishop Krum encouraged Anne to begin her seminary studies at the United Theological Seminary, a Methodist school, in 1979. She went on to attend General Theological Seminary in NYC for one semester to undertake the required Anglican studies. Accustomed to a relatively comfortable life in suburban Dayton surrounded by family and friends, the congested urban life of NYC and converted storage closet that served as her

dorm room would have been daunting had Anne not had so much experience living in strange new places. Ordained to the diaconate in June of 1982, Anne served her internship at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Oakwood, Ohio.

Immediately upon her priestly ordination in January of 1983, Bishop Black assigned her to be the vicar of St. David's Episcopal Church in Vandalia, Ohio, just north of Dayton, and she was later elected as the Rector. After serving there six years, she was called as the Rector of St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in Dublin, Ohio, a suburb of Columbus. During her thirteen-and-a-half-year tenure at St. Patrick's, Anne continued her work at the diocesan and national levels, becoming adept at navigating the various factions within the wider church during a tumultuous time. Her great gift was listening carefully and connecting with people one-on-one, which resulted in her being chosen to serve in many leadership roles. She was again elected to the Diocesan Standing Committee and served as president, chaired the Commission on Ministry, and led the Diocese's deputation at six General Conventions. At the national church level, she was a member of the Episcopal Leadership Task Force in 1994, serving with the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings as representatives of women clergy, as well as sitting on a variety of committees with colleagues as diverse as Bishop Jack Iker, the arch-conservative Bishop of Fort Worth, to the far more liberal Presiding Bishop, Edmond Lee Browning. Anne was a member of the Board of Examining Chaplains for twelve years. Her name was put forth in ten bishop searches; she was in the final round of three of those, but was never elected. The most-watched election was in 1988 in which the Rev. Barbara C. Harris was also a nominee, with the latter becoming the first woman regularly ordained as a bishop in the Anglican Communion.

Anne retired at the mandatory age of 72, having weathered many difficult situations and periods where her gender was more of an issue than her qualifications. She noted that male and female priests were often asked

different questions both by diocesan Commissions on Ministry and during the episcopal nomination process. In addition, women had more difficulty vesting in the clergy pension fund because the many roadblocks to ordination resulted in far shorter careers, and Anne was instrumental in getting more equitable policies adopted. Bishop Thompson also named Anne a Canon to the Cathedral in recognition of her many years of service.

After she retired from her position as Rector at St. Patrick's, Anne and Dick explored the snowbird life, first in Marco Island and then in the new development of Lighthouse Bay in Bonita Springs. They moved to Florida full time in 2009 to be closer to Becky and her family. Her inability to say "no" continued, and she served on the homeowner association board, assisted the pastors and sang in the choir at Lamb of God, taught water aerobics, and played competitive tennis until her back cried uncle. She and the little dog that Dick got for her, Bootsie, were a fixture in the neighborhood.

She loved her role as a grandmother to Becky's and Debbie's children, traveling to recitals and graduations and participating in family vacations. Zoom was no substitute for physical touch, so it was a joyous affair when the family could finally come together in person with Anne and Dick to celebrate her 90th birthday last July with a family reunion that included her daughter Becky (Gus) and grandchildren Sarah Penniman-Morin (Jim) and Mark Robbins-Penniman (Lindsey); her daughter Debbie (Fred) and grandchildren Max and Will, and, best of all, her first great-grandson, Teddy Penniman-Morin. They all survive her, as does her brother, Everett Wilson of Palm Springs, California, her nephews, Bill (Lori) Wilson and Everett (Karen) Wilson, her cousin Michele Martin, and the family of her late cousin Al Martin.

Anne was dearly loved, deeply respected and will be welcomed joyfully in the company of saints.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home, Family
Owned Since 1978.

Cemetery Details

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA 22211
<http://arlingtoncemetery.mil>

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

APR 6. 1:00 PM (ET)

Lamb of God Lutheran-Episcopal Church
19691 Cypress View Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33967

Tribute Wall



“ *Anne Wilson Robbins*

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ *Connie McCarroll lit a candle in memory of Anne Robbins*



Connie McCarroll - July 06, 2023 at 09:01 AM



“ *So sorry to hear of Anne's passing.....we knew her through Lamb of God church.
She was loved and respected by everyone....including us, of course.*

Jim and Marianne See

Marianne See - April 03, 2022 at 09:42 AM



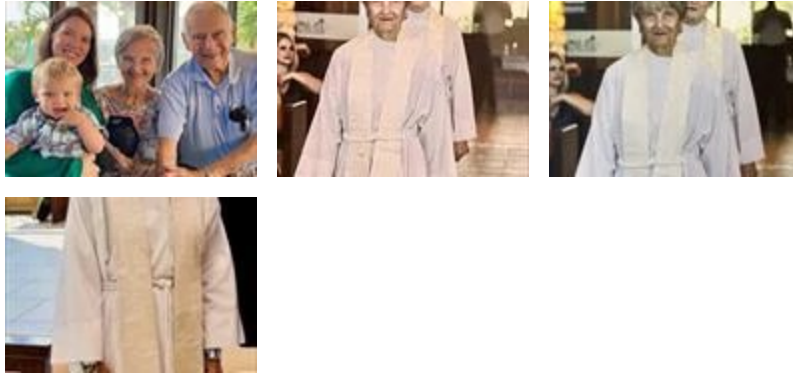
Thank you, Jim and Marianne. it's great to hear from you!

*Blessings,
Becky*

Becky Robbins-Penniman - April 26, 2022 at 06:26 AM

BR

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Becky Robbins-Penniman - March 27, 2022 at 08:49 PM

LB

“ Our love and prayers to all the Robbins family. We both knew and worked with Anne in various capacities over the years of her life as a priest in the Diocese and later when I (Louise) sponsored Anne during her time as a Discerner and for her Admission as a Companion of the Holy Cross. It was my joy to be present at Adelynrood when both Anne and daughter Becky were admitted to SCHC. May the love you all share be a comfort to you at this time of loss - but her gain. Louise and Fr. John Bower, Cincinnati, OH.



Louise Bower - March 27, 2022 at 06:22 PM

BR

Thank you, Louise, for this tribute and the wonderful memory of our admission as Companions. Peace be with you!
Becky

Becky Robbins-Penniman - March 28, 2022 at 01:48 PM