



## Brenda Gail Husson

Brenda has carried a visionary understanding of the possibilities of the Christian church and the gospel life from the beginning. Her studies in Third World Development and her early work with Bread for the World led to theological studies at Union Seminary and ordination into the Episcopal Church, and a ministry which has been lived entirely within this diocese. After her first priestly ministries in parishes in and around New York City, Brenda came almost two and a half decades ago to Saint James Church on Madison Avenue in New York, a landmark parish of extraordinary distinction across the Episcopal Church.

Her ministry at Saint James has been built around her understanding of the urgency and possibilities of the first experience of the Christian community by a willing seeker, and of the questions people wrestle with. She has made Saint James Church a vibrant center of Christian formation, a standard for excellence in preaching, and a wellspring of spiritual resource. Saint James is one of our largest churches, but it is also one of the most innovative. Here disciples are made for Jesus Christ, the invitation to discover the Christian life is explicitly made, and new priests are formed and mentored for the whole church.

Brenda was the first woman priest called to lead what we sometimes call a “cardinal parish” of the substantial leadership resources of a Saint James anywhere across the Episcopal Church. She is in the earliest generation of women leaders in the Episcopal Church, and soon will be the senior rector in Manhattan. Hers is a record of brilliant accomplishment, of sterling leadership, and of far-reaching vision, as she has invested the deep resources of her community in the shaping of an institution rooted always in excellence. But at heart, the Brenda I am privileged to know is a simple Bible Christian. A disciple of Jesus Christ.

Reflecting on her early formation as a priest in New York, she remembered “a real understanding of the necessity to invite people in and begin from where they are ... trusting that if people have come in, they are seeking God and that is enough to start. I also gained an ability to talk about spiritual subjects in ways that freed people to ask the questions they needed to ask and that invited them into faith.” Therefore, in recognition and gratitude for her confidence that the church is the Kingdom of Heaven, and her dedication to building that kingdom out of the living stones she has been given, offered to the glory of God, we, on this 9th day of November 2019, in the eighth year of our consecration, do award her

### The Bishop's Cross

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche  
XVI Bishop of New York