



Community of Mary Mother of Jesus in Sarasota

Saturday, January 8 2022, 4:00 pm EST

Presiders: Dotty Shugrue and Joan Pesce

Readers: Pat and Bob Ferkenhoff

Prayer Leaders: Maryal Gagnon, Anna Davis and Jill Striebinger

IT: Peg Bowen, Jerry Bires, Bridget Mary Meehan

Celebration of the Epiphany

Theme: The Gifts We Receive: The Gifts We Bring

Joan: All are welcome to our weekly liturgy celebrated by the community of Mary Mother of Jesus located in Sarasota. We have a shared Homily after the Gospel. If you wish to share unmute and when finished don't forget to mute again. Remember to re-mute to avoid background noise. We consecrate the Eucharist together so have a cup of wine/juice and a piece of bread at your table. We are an inclusive community, and all are welcome.

Dotty: "Three Kings Day" or the Epiphany brings us a message of celebrating that we are gifts, we bring the gift of ourselves to others, and we are willing to accept the gifts they give to us.

Christmas might be over, but it doesn't mean the gift giving (and receiving) is over. Children of Spanish descent all over the globe receive most of their gifts from the Three Kings, rather than from Santa Claus at Christmas. Before going to bed, the children place their old shoes with a wish list on top for the Three Kings. In the morning, the shoes are filled with toys and gifts from the Three Kings. These traditions have changed since "Santa Claus" came to town. Yet the tradition of celebration with gift giving, sharing special foods, and just having a great time as they honor the true gift, the Child who was protected by these special visitors and the Egyptians from the terror of King Herod.

Opening Prayer:

Maryal: O Christ-Light from the beginning of time you have graced the universe with your brilliance and your love. As we gather to celebrate travelers who followed a star to discover the birth of a child, and the Divine light within him and within them, may we remember our own birth into the light and love of Holy Mystery. May we, in this time of giving, reach out, now and throughout the

year, to those in need of your loving touch and healing graces. In your holy name we pray, Amen.

Opening Song: Light a Light. By Bridget Ball and Chris Shaw

<https://youtu.be/CTrY3g0vl88>

Joan: Transformation Rite

Let us recall times we did recognize the simple gifts other were offering to us and in return shared the Christ Presence of pure love with them,

Pause for several moments of silent reflection as you place hand over your heart.

ALL: I am sorry, please forgive me, I thank you, I love you.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Reader: Pat Ferkenhoff

Our First Reading is from the prophet Isaiah Ch 60, 1 – 6 (adapted from "A Multi-Gospel Single-Year Lectionary" by Wilda C. Gafney)

Arise daughter; shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Holy One has risen upon you. For watch now, daughter! Darkness shall cover all people and all on the earth, the Holy One will arise, and over you, daughter, God's glory will appear.

Nations shall come to your light, and monarchs to the brightness of your dawn. Lift your eyes round about, and see all of them gather, they come to you, daughter; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' hips. Then, you shall see and be

radiant; your heart shall tremble and swell, because the abundance of the sea shall turn toward you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you O daughter. Young camels of Midian and Ephah—all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praises of the Holy One. Your gates shall always be open, daughter, being led by their monarchs.

These are the inspired words of Wilda C. Gafney, and based on the Book of Isaiah the prophet. And our community affirms them by saying

All: Amen.

Reader: Bob Ferkenhoff

Our Second Reading is from "We Make the Road by Walking" by Brian McLaren pp.82-83.

They were called Magi...we know them as wise men. They were astrologers, holy men of a foreign religion. They had observed a strange celestial phenomenon, which they interpreted to mean that a new king had been born in Judea. According to Matthew's gospel, they traveled to honor him, bringing valuable treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh---precious gifts indeed.

In their giving of gifts, they were wiser than they realized. Gift-giving turns out, was at the heart of all Jesus would say and do. God is like a parent, Jesus would teach, who loves and shower sons and daughters with good gifts. The kingdom or commonwealth of God that Jesus constantly proclaimed was characterized by an abundant, gracious, extravagant economy of grace, of generosity, of gift-giving. "It is better to give than to receive," Jesus taught, and his followers came to understand Jesus himself as a gift expressing God's love to the whole world.

So, in memory of the wise men's gift-giving to Jesus, in honor of Jesus' teaching and example of giving, and as an echo of God's self-giving in Jesus, we joyfully give one another gifts when we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Not everyone felt generosity in response to this new baby.

King Herod was furious about anyone who might unsettle the status quo. When he deployed troops to the Bethlehem region with orders to kill all infant boys, Joseph was warned in a dream to escape. So, the family fled south to Egypt where Jesus spent part of his childhood as a refugee.

These are the inspired words of Brian McLaren and our community affirms them by saying: ALL: Amen

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

They followed a star shining in the east and found the Child fast asleep. They presented the gift of their very self and felt a powerful gift in return.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Gospel

Joan:

A reading from the Gospel attributed to the Apostle Matthew chapter 2.

After Jesus' birth—which happened in Bethlehem of Judea, during the reign of Herod—astrologers from the East arrived in Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the newborn ruler of the Jews? We observed his star at its rising and have come to pay homage." At this news Herod became greatly disturbed, as did all of Jerusalem. Summoning all the chief priests and religious scholars of the people, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

“In Bethlehem of Judea,” they informed him. “Here is what the prophet has written:

**‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
since from you will come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people, Israel.’**

Herod called the astrologers aside and found out from them the exact time of the star’s appearance. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, after having instructed them, “Go and get detailed information about the child. When you have found him, report back to me—so that I may go and offer homage, too.”

After their audience with the ruler, they set out. The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child lay. They were overjoyed at seeing the star and, upon entering the house, found the child with Mary, his mother. They prostrated themselves and paid homage. Then they opened their coffers and presented the child with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

They were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went back to their own country by another route.

These are the inspired words from Gospel writer known as Matthew and the community affirms them by saying, Amen.

**Dotty: Homily Starter
Community shares their inspirations.**

Anna: Our Statement of Faith

**We believe in the Holy One, a divine mystery
beyond all definition and rational understanding,
the heart of all that has ever existed,
that exists now, or that ever will exist.**

**We believe in Jesus, messenger of the Divine Word,
bringer of healing, heart of Divine compassion,
bright star in the firmament of the Holy One's
prophets, mystics, and saints.**

**We believe that We are called to follow Jesus
as a vehicle of divine love,
a source of wisdom and truth,
and an instrument of peace in the world.**

**We believe in the Spirit of the Holy One,
the life that is our innermost life,
the breath moving in our being,
the depth living in each of us.**

**We believe that the Divine kin-dom is here and now,
stretched out all around us for those
with eyes to see it, hearts to receive it,
and hands to make it happen.**

Liturgy of the Eucharist

**Dotty: As we prepare for this sacred meal, we are aware
of our call to serve, and to give freely of our gifts and we
willingly and humbly accept the abundance of gift given as
we journey sharing and accepting the pure and everlasting
love of the Holy.**

**We bring to this table our gifts shared and the gifts
received during this past year, as well as the gifts we send
to those who are hurting in so many. that may receive the
Energy of The Giver of Love as Love is all there is in the**

Divine Energy of Life. It heals, it gives strength, it comforts through you and me.

We bring to the table....

(Unmute and share what you hold in your heart so that we may join you in prayer

We bring these and all our cares, and concerns to the table of friendship and peace.

PREFACE

Jill:

**God is the Divine Presence within us.
And in all people everywhere.**

**Our hearts are full of the love of divine Presence
And we accept this Gift and share gift with one another.**

**We Affirm the gifts we give and share
And we accept the gifts others offer us out of their love and caring.**

**Here in this Place – Holy Holy Holy by Christopher Grundy
<https://youtu.be/cVWY9ouooI>**

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Anna:

Divine Presence, you brought forth all creation from your Life-Giving Womb. O Giver of all Gifts, you came as Love Poured Out to dwell among us. You revealed yourself to travelers who followed a star to the home where Jesus and Mary and Joseph lived so that they could share the gifts with this family in need and see the child who they believed to be a future King who would change the world.

Maryal:

Today, we see the gifts of Christ Presence shining forth as pure love in the eyes of the elderly, in the service of caregivers, in the witness of justice-makers, and in the dreams embedded in our own hearts. We give thanks for the Giver of Abundant gifts that nourishes and sustains us. We commit ourselves to be gifts of your goodness and generosity as we serve the needs of the least and the last in our world.

Jill:

As your people, we gather in the power of your Spirit. As followers of Jesus, we seek to live as wise and holy Spirit-filled people: courageous, prophetic, ever hopeful, and hope-filled as we answer your call to serve one another.

[Please extend your hands over your bread and wine]

We invoke Your Spirit upon these gifts of this Eucharistic table, bread of the grain and wine of the grape, that they may become gifts of wisdom, light and truth which remind us of our call to be the body of Christ to the world.

On the night before he faced his own death, Jesus sat at supper with his companions and friends. He reminded them of all that he taught them, and to fix that memory clearly, he bent down and washed their feet.

[lifting bread]

When he returned to his place, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and offered it to them saying: Take and eat; this is my very self.

[lifting cup]

Jesus then raised a cup of blessing, spoke the grace, and offered the wine saying: *Take and drink of the covenant*

made new again through my life in you. Whenever you remember me like this, I am among you.

This is the bread of life and cup of blessing. May our eating and drinking strengthen our hope!

Joan:

What we have heard with our ears, we will live with our lives; as we share communion, we will become communion, both Love's nourishment and Love's challenge.

Receive bread and cup now saying to one another "You are gift to me, Thank you "

Pause for reflection

Meditation Interlude 01/18/2021 – Performed by Linda Lee

<https://youtu.be/PeqOaIKGsVE>

Joan:

Let us proclaim the sacred presence of our nurturing God: Jesus, you are born again and again in us and through us each day.

We remember The Travelers from the East who followed a star that shined more brightly than any other. We rejoice that the Universal Christ remains always and ever present within and around us. We remember all those who have transitioned from life on earth to complete union with Divine Presence: We remember the prophet and saints in every age, who, light candles in the night, illuminated the darkness of doubt with faith, courage, and wisdom: Miriam and Sarah, Esther and Judith, Mary, Mother of Jesus, Joseph, and all great saints, prophets and martyrs. We remember our

sister priests, strong extraordinary women: Adele, Judy, Tish, Joan, Michele, and Sally. We remember, too, family members, friends, and member of MMOJ.

(Pause to remember names)

We recognize the great gift each has been to us. All are beloved souls who have blessed us and continue to inspire us.

We join in the divine cosmic dance in communion with all that is, all that was, and all that will be. Through Christ, in Christ, with Christ, all praise and glory echoes through the universe as your Spirit leaps for joy within us!

Meditation Interlude 01/18/2021 – Performed by Linda Lee

<https://youtu.be/9fnOG6jyIJo>

Anna:

Let us pray the way Jesus taught us to pray:

**O Holy One, who is within, around and among us,
We celebrate your many names.**

Your Wisdom come.

**Your will be done, unfolding from the depths within us,
Each day you give us all we need.**

You remind us of our limits, and we let go.

You support us in our power, and we act with courage.

For you are the dwelling place within us,

the empowerment around us,

and the celebration among us, now and forever. Amen

(Miriam Therese Winter)

Joan: Introductions Gratitudes Announcements

BLESSING

Let us pray together our blessing:

May we bring to our lives the knowledge that “God loves things by becoming them. God loves things by uniting with them, not excluding them. Through the act of creation, God manifested the eternally flowing Divine Presence into the physical and material world. (The Universal Christ, Richard Rohr). May we shine our light with courage and spread Jesus’s Good News of the Way by our lives. Amen.

Closing Song: What Shall I Give by Sara Thomsen

<https://youtu.be/UUTs9qa5h3>