Mary Mother Of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
Christmas Eve Liturgy, Dec 24, 2022

Presiders: Bridget Mary Meehan, ARCWP and Peg Bowen
Readers: Jim Brandi and Beth Ponce
Prayer Leader: Suzanne Bires and Jerry Bires

Zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81534075389?pwd=TTdGY2NxS3AzTW13ODJESkdYME9aUT09

Meeting ID: 815 3407 5389
Passcode: 803326

Theme: Birthing Love in our World

Bridget Mary: Greeting and Welcome
A warm welcome to Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Christmas Liturgy. Our theme is birthing love in our world.

You will notice that the words to some of our Christmas carols refer to Jesus as Christ Sophia. The word Sophia is the Greek word for Holy Wisdom and is personified as female in the Biblical books of Proverbs and Wisdom in the Old Testament. St. Paul refers to Jesus, as Christ, the Wisdom of God, Incarnate. These carols were written by Jann Alderidge Clanton to celebrate the hope-filled message of Christmas that speaks to believers today.

Opening Song: Music: O Holy Night
"Come to Our World, O Christ-Sophia" – Jann Alderidge Clanton

http://jannaldredgeclanton.com/come-to-our-world-o-christ-sophia-christmas-carol-video/

Come to our world, O Christ-Sophia, Wisdom;
our hearts are longing for Your peaceful way.
Lead us from fear and bondage into freedom;
with You we labor to bring Your new day.

Transform our world, O Christ-Sophia, Wisdom;
the poor and wounded await healing days.
Give us the power to sound Your call to freedom;
as equal partners, we show Your new way.

Led by Your Truth and Life within us growing,
we follow You on Your pathways of peace.
Filled with Your grace, Your loving kindness showing,
we share our gifts and our visions release.

REFRAIN:

Our weary world still longs for new creation,
for peace and justice coming to the earth.
Hope springs anew; we sing in celebration;
O Christ-Sophia, blessed be Your birth;
O Christ-Sophia, blessed be Your birth.
Words © Jann Aldredge-Clanton

Peg: Rite of Transformation:

For the times, we did not see the presence of Christ in ourselves and others…
(pause briefly)

All: We ask forgiveness.

For the times our words or behaviors have harmed or hurt others …
(pause briefly)

All: We ask forgiveness.

For the times, we have missed opportunities to birth Christ in our world…
(*pause briefly*)

All: We ask forgiveness.

Let us extend our arms in a gesture of mutual forgiveness, and pray:

All: Please forgive me, thank you, I love you.

ALL: Sing Glory to God- Linda Lee Miller

https://youtu.be/dgn_8q1UWwk

Bridget Mary: Opening Prayer:

We rejoice in outpouring love of the Holy One manifested in the birth of Jesus. We rejoice in the wonders of divine presence dwelling among us and within us each day bringing forth amazing blessings even when we cannot see how.

All: May it be so! Alleluia!

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Jim Brandi: First Reading: A Reading from Isaiah(9:1-6)
The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of deep shadows
a light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing.

For a child is born to us, a son is given us;
They name him Wonder-Counselor, Prince of Peace.
His dominion is vast and forever peaceful.
These are the inspired words of the prophet Isaiah and we respond to them by saying:
All Thanks be to God. May it be so.

Psalm Response: Psalm 96 – May the Christ Light Shine in You

(Music and Words by Kathy Sherman)

https://youtu.be/tY0Rj9Yd2lk

Sung Response:
May the Christ Light Shine in You!
May the Christ Light shine in Me.
And together we will shine
With God's love to the world.

Your light enlivens the world, O Holy One
There is none to compare with you!
All of Creation is clothed with your majesty.
Mirroring your love throughout the cosmos.
Rejoice in the Radiant One, O people of the light.
Sung Response: May the Christ Light Shine in You! (Repeat whole verse)

Beth Ponce: Second Reading: A Reflection on the birth of Jesus
In Luke's story, Mary was probably well into her labor before finally finding shelter. When active labor arrived at last, surely the midwives had also arrived to help Mary manage her rapid, excruciatingly painful contractions and to show Joseph just how to support her as she begin the arduous effort of pushing the newborn Jesus into a waiting world and, more immediately, into the midwives' waiting arms.

We won't dwell on Mary's anguished cries, her sweat, her blood or her tears- but I can tell you that when Jesus appeared at last, there was no need for chanting angels because the joy and wonder reflected in Mary and Joseph's faces shone more brightly than any guiding star.

The long -awaited child is born. Mary is safe and Joseph is as proud and relieved as any new dad trying not to faint over the intensity of the watching his wonder woman wife give birth.

Mary labored long and well to birth a child who would be all about God's love everlasting. When he was old enough, she would teach him the tenets of Judaism- summed up in her Magnificat- God's justice-reign in the face of hatred.

My midwife's question for each of us is to ask in what way are we laboring, like Mary, to birth God's abiding love into a world so much in need of it?
In what way are, like Joseph, supporting the efforts of all who labor on behalf of the marginalized-refugees, immigrants, the homeless, poor or victims of sex trafficking?

In what way are we, like the midwives, supporting our powerful birth

Ing God, who longs for right relationship and protect a Mother Earth, that, in fact, gave birth to us all?

These are the inspired words of Chris Schenk in "Nativity of the Lord" and we respond to them by saying:
All: Thanks be to God. May it be so.

Gospel Acclamation Alle, Alle, Alleluia with Linda Lee Miller! (sung)

https://youtu.be/ID5UGWcS6Ws

Peg: Gospel: A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem and see this event which God has made known to us." They went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger; once they saw, they reported what had been told them concerning this child. All who heard of it were astonished at the report given them by the shepherds.

Mary treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.

These are the inspired words of the Gospel writer Luke, and we affirm them by saying:
All: Thanks be to God. May it be so.

Gospel Acclamation Alle, Alle, Alleluia with Linda Lee Miller

https://youtu.be/ID5UGWcS6Ws

Homily Starter: What Will We Bring to Birth? (A Meditative Dialogue)

Peg:
My sisters and brothers, what will we bring to birth in the world of the New Creation?

pause for a few moments to reflect

Bridget Mary and All: Together we respond:
Wisdom and justice,
peace and compassion,
concern for all God's little ones,
the hungry and all who bear the brunt of indifference and oppression.

Peg:
My sisters and brothers, what will we bring to birth in the earth of the New Creation?

pause for a few moments to reflect

Bridget Mary and All: Together we respond:
A deep respect for our planet,
Its winds' song and its waters,
The topsoil and its forests,
And a oneness with the wilderness
that is image of our soul.

Peg:
My sisters and brothers, what will we bring to birth in the church of the New Creation?

pause for a few moments to reflect

Bridget Mary and All: Together we respond:
A total disdain for power that diminishes or destroys,
divestment of wealth and status,
a sharing of human resources, based on mutuality
and the sudden surprise of grace.

Peg:
My sisters and brothers, what will we bring to birth in the hearts of the New Creation?

pause for a few moments to reflect

Bridget Mary and All: Together we respond:
An unbreakable bond in the Spirit
that binds as one all brothers and sisters,
transcending class, color, culture,
that treats no personal preference,
no physical or spiritual difference
as aberration or handicap.

Peg*:*
One has been born among us
Who heralds such liberation,
Human liberation,

Women's liberation and all genders' liberation
have taken flesh among us,
and in Spirit dwell with us.

pause for a few moments to reflect

Bridget Mary and All: Together we respond:
Holy the woman Mary who helped this happen.
Holy are we who give birth to love each day
Holy are all who give birth to the Word Made Flesh,
Christ Incarnate everywhere!
(Source: A Psalm for Bringing to Birth, Woman Word, by Miriam Therese Winter, p.31)

Community Sharing

Peg and All: Profession of Faith:

Like Mary,
we believe in cherishing good news.
Like the angels,
we believe in singing God's praise.
Like the shepherds,
we believe that God's presence in our life is something worth talking about.
Like generations before,
we believe that God is with us.
Like the generations to come,
we believe that God is with us.
God is here. God is love.
We believe. Thanks be to God!
(Source: **Rev. Sarah Speed for Liturgy for "God dwells with us" a Christmas liturgy in A Sanctified Art, sanctifiedart.org)**

Prayers of the Community: Jerry B.
O Gift Giver and Hostess of Feasts, we come to table with the cares and concerns of those who have asked us to remember them in our prayers

We bring to the table prayers for our community and the world.
(Response: In Christ, may we give birth to love!)

We bring to the table the sick, the vulnerable, the lonely and those who are in need. We pray. ***R****. In Christ, may we give birth to love!*

We bring to the table all who experience poverty, racism, sexism and homophobia. We pray. ***R*** *In Christ, may we give birth to love!*

We bring to the table prayers for the end of the war in Ukraine and Russia. We pray ***R*** *In Christ, may we give birth to love!*

We bring to the table the need for wisdom for our newly elected political leaders in Congress and State Houses across our country. **R** *In Christ, may we give birth to love!*

Who and what else shall we bring to the table today?
(Joan Meehan-intention book)

(Please turn your mic on to offer a prayer, then mic off. Share your prayer intentions with the words: I bring to the table…)

Jerry B. Closing Prayer:

O Maker of Miracles, we trust that your love flows through us as we reach out with kindness and compassion to help our sisters and brothers who are hurting and in need. May we bring Christ to birth each day in our world. Amen. May it be so.

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

Bridget Mary: Blessed are You, Holy One, through Your divine providence we have this bread, to share, the Bread of Life.
and All: Blessed are You, Holy One, forever.

Peg: Blessed are You, O Loving One through Your divine providence we have this wine to share, our spiritual drink.
Peg and All: Blessed are You, Holy One, forever.

Bridget Mary: Nurturing One, we are united in this sacrament by the love of Christ, whose birth we celebrate this at Christmas feast.
Bridget Mary and All: Amen, may it be so.

PREFACE:
Suzanne B.: Christ is born in our hearts each day
Jerry B. and ALL: And within all creation.

Suzanne B: Lift up your hearts.
Jerry B. and ALL: We lift them up as we celebrate Jesus' birth this day.

Suzanne B. Rejoice in the wonders of the cosmos in new life evolving each day.
Jerry B. and All: Alleluia

We Are Holy –

https://youtu.be/orKBBIj5LZA

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Suzanne B: We rejoice in the dawning of the sacred promise of God's Anointed, fulfilled in Mary's womb, in a shining star, in humble shepherds, in a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes. We celebrate your presence in our everyday moments of laughter and tears, hopes and dreams.

Jerry B: We gather together to celebrate the birth of Jesus and the miracles of new life in sacred stories of grace as we share the bread of life and lift the cup of blessing at this festive meal.

(Community raises hands and prays the following Invocation of the Holy Spirit)

Bridget Mary and All: Life-giving Spirit, you deepen your Presence within us and in these gifts of bread and wine as we pray:

(Community holds bread and prays together)

On the night before he died, while at supper with his friends, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread and gave it to them saying, "Take this, all of you, and eat. Do this in memory of me."

Pause

(Community holds cup up and prays together)

Peg and ALL: In the same way, Jesus took the cup of wine. He said the blessing, gave the cup to his friends and said, "Take this all of you and drink. Do this in memory of me."

Peg and All: Let us proclaim the sacred presence of our nurturing God:
Jesus, by your birth, life, death and rising, you have shown us how to birth God anew each day.

Suzanne B:
We celebrate the birth as Jesus of Nazareth, the son of a poor woman, born among animals and proclaimed by angels. We see the face of God shining brightly

in the eyes of the elderly, in the service of care-givers and in all who support those who labor to give birth to goodness, compassion and justice each day.

Jerry B:
We remember the prophet and saints who have gone before us, Mary, Mother of Jesus, Joseph, and all our beloved family and friends. We recall their gifts passed down to us through the ages. In union with the Cloud of Witnesses, we join our prayers to those of the entire communion of Saints.

Bridget Mary and ALL:
Through Christ Sophia, in Christ Sophia, with Christ Sophia, we are birthing a new creation in the great Mystery that is beyond the beyond and forever evolving in love.

The Great Amen with Linda Lee Miller (Sung)

https://youtu.be/Dy76fpfkNsg

THE PRAYER OF JESUS
Jim B. and All:

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your will be done by all created beings!
May your beloved community of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.
Amen.
(Adapted from The New Zealand Book of Prayer | He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa.
This version of the Lord's prayer was influenced by Maori theologians)

Beth: THE SIGN OF PEACE
Let us share a gesture of deep peace and justice with everyone in the circle of life as we sing “Peace is flowing like a River” by Carey Landry

https://youtu.be/ob6HgTQ6lZ4

LITANY FOR THE BREAKING OF BREAD

Bridget Mary and ALL: Loving God, You call us to speak truth to power. We will do so.

Loving God, You call us to live the Gospel of peace and justice. We will do so.

Loving God, You call us to be Your presence in the world. We will do so.

Peg: This is Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, loving us forever. All are invited to partake of this sacred banquet of love.

Peg: Receive who you are - Love Incarnate- the Christ Presence - in our world.
ALL: Amen.

COMMUNION- Meditation: Silent Night
"Silent Night, Each Holy Child " Shaina Noll

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mhXGwctysc

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
'Round every birthday, each mother and child
Each Holy Infant is tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, each holy child sleep in peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bridget Mary:
Creator of new beginnings, we awaken to your love born anew in our world as we share your gifts at our holy table. May your tender presence continue to open our hearts to the daily wonders of life that surround us each day. May we birth Christ in our world through our loving care for others especially those most in need.
ALL: May it be so. Amen.

Thanksgiving, Introductions, Announcements

CONCLUDING RITE

Peg:

The Holy One is within you.
ALL: and within all.

(Please extend your hands in mutual blessing)
BLESSING

Bridget Mary and All:
From generation to generation,
a light has shone in the darkness.
From generation to generation,
Christ Sophia's love has moved through us.

DISMISSAL
Peg: May we share Christmas joy with everyone today, as you go in peace.
ALL: Thanks be to God. May it be so.

CONCLUDING HYMN: Joy to World - Music (see new words!)
"Sound Forth the News That Wisdom Comes"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSVdbl-ulJw

Sound forth the news that Wisdom comes
to bring new life to birth.
Arise with hope, Her labor join,
and peace shall fill the earth,
and peace shall fill the earth,
and peace, and peace shall fill the earth.

No more let fear and custom hide
the path of Wisdom fair.
She leads the way to life and joy,
with gifts for all to share,
with gifts for all to share,
with gifts, with gifts for all to share.

Joyful are we who heed the call
of Wisdom in our souls.
With Her we break oppression's wall,
so love may freely flow,
so love may freely flow,
so love, so love may freely flow.

Crown Wisdom Queen of heaven and earth;
Her reign will set us free.
Fling wide the gates that all may come
join hands and dance with glee,
join hands and dance with glee,
join hands, join hands and dance with glee.

Words © Jann Aldredge-Clanton, from Inclusive Hymns for Liberating Christians

Liturgy by Bridget Mary Meehan
https://arcwp.org, https://marymotherofjesus.net

If you want to add an intercession to our MMOJ Community Prayer book, please send an email to
If you want to invite someone to attend our liturgy, please refer them our website at MaryMotherofJesus.net
To support our community, please send your check to:
Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
St Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Rd, Sarasota, Florida 34238