

**Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
Fifth Week of Lent**

March 25, 2023

Presiding: Andrea Seabaugh & Michael Rigdon

Readers: Mary Kay Staudohar & Joan Pesce

Prayer Leaders: Jim Brandi, Suzanne & Jerry Bires, Beth Ponce

IT Team: Cheryl Brandi & Jerry Bires

Welcome. Andrea. We warmly welcome you to the inclusive Catholic Community of Mary Mother of Jesus in Sarasota. All are welcome here.

Whoever you are,
Wherever you are,
Just as you are,
You are welcome at this table.
(Integral Christianity by Paul Smith)

Theme. Lent: from asceticism to contemplation.

Sign of Peace. Andrea. Let us offer each other a sign of peace.

All: *(Namaste pose 🙏 toward camera)* Namaste. The peace of Christ be with you!
Namaste.

Gathering Prayer of St Francis <https://youtu.be/hC77O0fMuL0> (2:55)

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.
Where there is injury your pardon, God,
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.
Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness only light,
And where there's sadness, ever joy.
Oh God, grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled, as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved, as to love with all my soul.
Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
In giving of ourselves that we receive,
And in dying that were born to eternal life.
Make me a channel of your peace.

Transformation Prayer. Beth. We commit ourselves to respond to the needs of others in whatever ways we can and to share our faith that goodness and love will prevail. May we be transformed by our sharing in the paschal mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection. **All:** Transform us, O Holy One!

Liturgy of the Word (Please pause for a moment of silence.)

Mary Kay. The first reading is from the prophet Ezekiel.

God said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Listen to what they're saying: 'Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone, there's nothing left of us.'

"Therefore, prophesy. Tell them, 'God, the Master, says: I'll dig up your graves and bring you out alive—O my people! Then I'll take you straight to the land of Israel. When I dig up graves and bring you out as my people, you'll realize that I am God. I'll breathe my life into you and you'll live. Then I'll lead you straight back to your land and you'll realize that I am God. I've said it and I'll do it. God's Decree.'" (From *The Message*, by Eugene H Peterson)

Response. Michael. Dialog between lover and beloved (The beginning of *The Song—Best of All Songs—Solomon's Song*. Excerpts from *The Message*.)

Suzanne. (The Woman)

Kiss me—full on the mouth!

Yes! For your love is better than wine,
headier than your aromatic oils.

The syllables of your name murmur like a meadow brook.

No wonder everyone loves to say your name!

Take me away with you! Let's run off together!

An elopement with my King-Lover!

We'll celebrate, we'll sing,
we'll make great music.

Yes! For your love is better than vintage wine.

Everyone loves you—of course! And why not?

I am weathered but still elegant,

oh, dear sisters in Jerusalem,

Weather-darkened like Kedar desert tents,
time-softened like Solomon's Temple hangings.

Don't look down on me because I'm dark,
darkened by the sun's harsh rays.

My brothers ridiculed me and sent me to work in the fields.

They made me care for the face of the earth,
but I had no time to care for my own face

Tell me where you're working

—I love you so much—

Tell me where you're tending your flocks,
where you let them rest at noontime.
Why should I be the one left out,
outside the orbit of your tender care?

Jerry. (The Man)

If you can't find me, loveliest of all women,
it's all right. Stay with your flocks.
Lead your lambs to good pasture.
Stay with your shepherd neighbors.
You remind me of Pharaoh's
well-groomed and satiny mares.
Pendant earrings line the elegance of your cheeks;
strands of jewels illumine the curve of your throat.
I'm making jewelry for you, gold and silver jewelry
that will mark and accent your beauty.

Joan P. The second reading is from Paul's letter to the Romans.

Anyone completely absorbed in self ignores God, ends up thinking more about self than God. That person ignores who God is and what he is doing. And God isn't pleased at being ignored.

But if God himself has taken up residence in your life, you can hardly be thinking more of yourself than of him. Anyone, of course, who has not welcomed this invisible but clearly present God, the Spirit of Christ, won't know what we're talking about. But for you who welcome him, in whom he dwells—even though you still experience all the limitations of sin—you yourself experience life on God's terms. It stands to reason, doesn't it, that if the alive-and-present God who raised Jesus from the dead moves into your life, he'll do the same thing in you that he did in Jesus, bringing you alive to himself? When God lives and breathes in you (and he does, as surely as he did in Jesus), you are delivered from that dead life. With his Spirit living in you, your body will be as alive as Christ's! (From *The Message*, by Eugene H Peterson)

Response. Michael. Lovers' Dialog (Continuation of *The Song—Best of All Songs*)

Suzanne. (The Woman)

When my King-Lover lay down beside me,
my fragrance filled the room.
His head resting between my breasts—
the head of my lover was a sachet of sweet myrrh.
My beloved is a bouquet of wildflowers
picked just for me from the fields of Engedi.

Jerry. (The Man)

Oh, my dear friend! You're so beautiful!
And your eyes so beautiful—like doves!”

Suzanne. (The Woman)

And you, my dear lover—you're so handsome!

And the bed we share is like a forest glen.

We enjoy a canopy of cedars

enclosed by cypresses, fragrant and green.

I'm just a wildflower picked from the plains of Sharon, a lotus blossom from
the valley pools.

Jerry. (The Man)

A lotus blossoming in a swamp of weeds—

that's my dear friend among the girls in the village.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cONM7poWcXc>

The good news from the Gospel attributed to John. **Michael**



Shared homily. Michael & MMOJ community

When I shine, you shall glow.

When I flow, you shall become wet.

When you sigh, you draw my divine heart into you.

A blissful abiding prevails between us.
—Mechthild of Magdeburg

Profession of Faith. Jim & All

We believe in God, who creates all things,
who embraces all things, who celebrates all things,
who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.

We believe in God as the source of all life,
who baptizes this planet with living water.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the suffering one, the poor one, the
malnourished one, the climate refugee, who loves and cares for this
world and who suffers with it.

And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life,
who came to reconcile and renew this world and everything in it. We
believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God,
who moves with God and who moves among and with us today. We
believe in everlasting life in God.

And we believe in the hope that one day
God will put an end to death and all destructive forces.
(Gurukul Theological college, India / adapted by Keld B. Hansen 2009)

Community prayers. Beth. We now bring our prayer intentions to the table.
Response: You hear us, O Holy One.

We pray for our sister Peg Bowen. May she continue to experience healing love
and strength. And for all our MMOJ members, family, and friends who are
experiencing chronic or life threatening illness. **R**

We pray for the devastated families and all still suffering from earthquakes and
the other natural disasters in our world. **R**

We pray for the people of Ukraine and Russia that they may live in peace
without fear and that justice will prevail for all. **R**

We pray that our political leaders will put the flourishing of all people before
power and greed. **R**

We pray for our MMOJ intentions in our community prayer book. **R**

For whom and what else shall we pray?

Holy Mystery, may we respond to the needs of our sisters and brothers in loving prayer and solidarity. **All:** Amen

Offering of our gifts. Michael. *(Have bread and wine/juice on your table)*

O Holy One, we bring you our gifts from creation, bread 🍞 of the grain 🌾 and wine 🍷 of the grapes 🍇. We recognize that they are holy in you their creator. And we know that they will make us holy, one with you and one with each other.

Michael. Please join in song to begin our Eucharistic prayer.

Eucharistic Prayer We Are Holy <https://youtu.be/orKBB1j5LZA> (1:33)

Jim & All. We thank you for the gift of Jesus in history and the gift of Jesus in faith. Through him, you breathe life into us. His life on earth was deeply moved by his vision of your constant presence in everyone he met. He reflected you in everything he said and did in his life well lived. And he showed us by his many examples not only how we should live, but also for what we might even die, as he did, in the service of the gospel message of selfless love.

(Hold your hand over bread and wine)

Andrea & All. Jesus, we celebrate the last meal you had with your followers. We call upon Sacred Spirit, ever and always with us, to bring blessing on this bread and wine as they are made sacred through our faith in the presence of Christ. During Jesus's life on earth, he lived and died loving the poor, healing the sick and challenging the injustices within society. Because of his ministry, Jesus was feared by the authorities, and they sought out ways to bring him to his death.

Beth & All. On the night before he faced his own death, Jesus sat at the Seder supper with his companions and friends. He reminded them of all that he taught them, and to fix that memory clearly with them, he bent down and washed their feet. *All lift 🍞 and pray the following:*

When he returned to his place at the table, he lifted the bread, spoke the blessing, broke the bread and offered it to them saying:
Take and eat, this is my very self.

Pause, then lift the 🍷 and pray the following:

Jim & All. He took the cup, spoke the grace, and offered it to them saying:
Take and drink. This is the new covenant. Whenever you remember me like this, I am among you. *(pause)*

Andrea & All. 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.

Let us share this bread and cup to proclaim and live the gospel of justice,
nonviolence and peace, remembering that we are bearers of light and hope. We
are the Christ alive today.

Everyone consumes the bread and wine at this time

Instrumental Sentinel Meadow, Mars Lasar
<http://youtube.com/watch?v=B9JFOEcq1GA&fea> 2:33

Mary Kay & All. Sacred Spirit, 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 your Sacred Presence—
Mary of Nazareth and all great saints, prophets and martyrs. We also remember
family members, friends, and MMOJ members. We remember all those whose
lives have been lost to covid, to war, to racism and other forms of exclusion and
violence that exist in our world. And we remember those you wish to be
remembered (*we pause to remember our loved ones*) All are beloved souls who have
blessed our lives and who continue to inspire us. And we respond together: **All:**
So be it!

Joan P. We pray our common prayer that Jesus taught us:

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)*

Final prayer. Andrea. O Holy One, may this season of Lent be for us
a time of joy and compassion.
When you shine, we shall glow.
When you flow, we shall become wet.
When we sigh, we draw your divine heart into us.
A blissful abiding prevails between us. **All:** Alleluia

Michael. Please share the gratitude you hold in your hearts.

Announcements

Community blessing. https://youtu.be/2mWaoGn_jTY

Andrea. We go forth filled with the presence of Christ. **All:** Alleluia, Amen.

Concluding The saints go marching in. <https://youtu.be/xvIHW-UbtgA>

If you want to add an intercession to our MMOJ Community Prayer book, please
send an email to Joan Meehan jmeehan515@aol.com

To support our community, please send your check to:

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