

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Easter Vigil Liturgy 2023



"Descent to Hell" by Duccio, painted 1308 to 1311 A.D.

MMOJ Liturgical Ministers for Easter Vigil

Presiders: Bridget Mary Meehan, Elena Garcia, Michael Rigdon, Kathryn Shea, Lee Breyer, Dotty Shugrue, Readers: Mary Al Gagnon, Anna Davis, Joan Pesce, Prayer Leaders: Beth Ponce, Jim Brandi, IT, Cheryl Brandi

Gathering and Welcome:

Elena: We warmly welcome you to our celebration of the Easter Vigil, a holy and blessed night in which we recall the reawakening of Jesus to new life. We are so happy you have joined us and we welcome you to share in our eucharistic celebration of Hope as we gather around this zoom table of friendship and unity.

Service of Light

Elena: The Divine Mystery, which is our Lover, the power of the Beloved which rises in every act of love and the Breath of Love which breathes in, with and through and beyond the Cosmos is with you, within you and beyond you.

On this most sacred night, in which Jesus Christ passed over from this earth to a new life, the People of God everywhere come together from all over to watch and pray.

Like Mary Magdalene and the other women, who came to the tomb weeping and, there, encountered the Risen One's ongoing presence with

them, our tears and longings move us more deeply into union with God and with our sisters and brothers everywhere.

Blessing of the Fire and Paschal Candle

Elena: We begin our liturgical celebration today by blessing the Easter fire, lighting our Easter Candle and our individual candles – a symbol of the Risen Christ, alive in and around us. Hallelujah!

Elena sets the fire. When lit, the fire is blessed.

Elena: Let us pray. As we bless this new fire -- and may our paschal celebrations, be inflamed with new hope. May our Easter celebration empower us to make possible the impossible. Christ is raised from the dead, and as his sisters and brothers, we are raised with him imbued with Resurrection power.

Preparation of the Paschal Candle

Elena:

Christ, yesterday and today (pause); The Beginning and the End

The Alpha and Omega; *(first pin is inserted)*

All time belongs to God; *(second pin is inserted)*

And all the ages; *(third pin is inserted)*

To Jesus, be glory and power; *(fourth pin is inserted)*

Elena: Through all time and all places, Amen *(fifth pin is inserted)*

Elena and All: May the light of Christ - rising in glory - dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds. We Rejoice. We Remember.

Blessing of the Fire and Paschal Candle

Elena: We begin our liturgical celebration today by blessing the Easter fire, lighting our Easter Candle and our individual candles – a symbol of Jesus, alive in and around us.

Elena sets the fire. When lit, the fire is blessed.

Elena: Let us pray, as we bless this new fire, may we be inflamed with new hope in this feast of eternal light.

of Christ - rising in glory - dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

Elena and All: We Rejoice.

Elena: The Christ – a spark that lit the cosmos at the beginning of time.

Procession

*As our individual candles are lit from the Easter Candle, The Cantor will sing three times, each time on a higher note: “**Lumen Christi, light of Christ,**” and all will respond with **Michael: Deo Gratia, thanks be to God.***

This is the time when you light your candles and hold them up so that they maybe symbolically joined to the many candles on this table that represent our loved ones who have transitioned into eternal life and are united with us in a communion of saints.

Michael: Lumen Christi, light of Christ. (3 Xs)

Michael and All: Deo gratia. Thanks be to God!

Easter Proclamation

Michael: At the Easter Vigil, the Church proclaims the Exultet, a glorious hymn of praise, about the Holy One’s compassionate presence in creation, the liberating history of the people of Israel, the story of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. In the radiant presence of the Risen Christ dwelling within us and present everywhere, we are filled with hope for the transformation of our suffering world in the embrace of infinite love. May we be filled with joy as we experience a contemporary Easter Proclamation.

Copeland’s “Fanfare for the Common Man” played by an orchestra in Dublin Airport.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltBX_AhuaWc

The Liturgy of the Word

Mary Al: First Reading: A Reading from “Jesus at Easter: Individual ascension or Universal Resurrection?”

Every major event in Jesus' life is described in the gospel texts except the Resurrection. there is no description of the actual moment of Jesus' transition from buried death to visionary life.

To fill in the absence of any gospel description of the Easter moment itself, two divergent theologies and iconographies were developed within Western and Eastern Christianity.

In the **Empty Tomb Tradition**, female and male disciples discover the vacant tomb on Easter Sunday Morning. This involves one (John 20:1-2), two (Matt. 28:1), three (Mark 16:1) or more women (Luke 24:10). It also involves men in some competition with one another (Luke 24:12; John 20:3-10).

In the **Multiples Appearances Tradition**, Jesus appears to and speaks with both female and male disciples... {but} only two named individuals are singled out by themselves as recipients of such apparitions: Mary in John 20:1-18 and Peter in Luke 24:34.

In Western Christianity, the Easter moment was already depicted with Jesus' symbolic body by 400, and by his physical body by 900. From 900-1300, Jesus' physical body was depicted first inside the tomb, then emerging from it (one leg still in, the other already out) and finally hovering outside and above the tomb.

In Eastern Christianity, the Easter moment is radically different. Jesus appears invading Hades -As Death's -Prison by trampling underfoot Hades as Death's Warden and liberating- hand to-hand- the whole human race represented by and incarnated in Adam and Eve. Created by 700, this tradition develops and expands across 1300 years but never deviates from the vision of what we should call the Universal Resurrection of Jesus-and-Humanity. **Jesus never arises alone in Eastern Christianity. Next, more than that, Jesus raises the whole human race with him.**

In the Easter imagery of Eastern Christianity is that Jesus almost always carries a cross symbolic of his Execution. Eastern iconography holds closely and visually together the individual execution of Jesus and the Universal Resurrection with Jesus.

When Jesus was executed for nonviolent resistance to violent injustice and carrying the cross of that execution, grasps the hands of Adam- and -Eve , that is , of all humanity and liberates them from death, that images makes this claim and has this meaning: only nonviolent resistance to violence can liberate our species from death, can save humanity from an escalatory violence that leads inevitably to cosmicide. That is the challenge of Christianity's Anastasis to Humanity's Evolution.

These are the inspired words of John Dominic Crossan and we respond, **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm: Praising Song by Karen Drucker with MMOJ Community

<https://youtu.be/aeXmPLVs13I>

Gloria: A Joyful Gloria by Linda Lee and Rick Miller

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IA5I0nODZI

Anna Davis: Second Reading: A Reading from the Letter to the Romans (6:3-4)

Sisters and Brothers, are you aware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through Baptism into death, so just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God, we too live in newness of life.

These are the inspired words of Paul in the Letter to the Romans and we respond,

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Alle, Alle, Alleluia: Linda Lee <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ID5UGWcS6Ws>

Gospel from the apostle John, with commentary from Elizabeth Johnson

Joan P: On the first day of the week, early in the morning, while it was still dark, Mary of Magdala went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed. So she came running to Simon Peter, and to the other disciples and said to them: "They have taken away the Master out of the tomb, and we do not know where they laid him!" So Peter started off with John the disciple, and they went to the tomb. When Simon Peter entered the tomb, he looked at the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth which had been on Jesus' head. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first, went inside too, and he saw for himself and believed. For they did not understand the writing which says that Jesus must rise again from the dead. The disciples then returned to their companions.

Dotty: Meanwhile, Mary was standing close outside the tomb weeping. Still weeping she leaned forward into the tomb. After again seeing the empty tomb, Mary turned around and walked to the garden. She turned and looked at Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. "Why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" he asked. Supposing him to be the gardener, Mary answered: "If it was you sir, who carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away myself." "Mary!" said Jesus. She called out and exclaimed in Hebrew: "Rabboni!" (which is to say, "Teacher.") "Do not touch me," Jesus said; "for I have not yet ascended to God but go to my brothers and sisters and tell them that I am ascending to my God and their God." Mary of Magdala went and told the disciples that she had seen the Risen One and that he had said this to her.

(Excerpts from the Gospel of John) (Mary's leadership after the resurrection and ascension)

Commentary by Elizabeth Johnson

Joan P: Jesus' death is a consequence of the hostile responses of religious and civil rulers to the style and content of his ministry; to which he was radically faithful with a freedom that would not quit. But contrary to this judgment of the powerful against him, the resurrection discloses that in and through and beyond his death, God's loving power and wisdom are winning. Despite all appearances to the contrary, it turns out that God did not abandon Jesus on the cross after all. Rather, when human beings had done their worst and there was no future left for this victim of unjust state punishment, then the vivifying Spirit of God quickened him to life. Instead of dying into nothingness, Jesus dies in the living mystery of God.

Dotty: The resurrection of Jesus did not end the suffering of the world. Crosses keep on being set up throughout history, and agony perdures. But Christ crucified and risen discloses the truth that divine justice continuously leavens the world and does so in a way different from the techniques of dominating violence. The victory is won not by the sword of a warrior god but by the power of compassionate love that brings the living God into solidarity with those who suffer in order to heal and set free.

Jesus' resurrection is the beginning of the resurrection of all the dead. It inserts that future as a reality already here in the struggling world. Just as the living mystery of God enveloped Jesus at the end of the darkness of death, we too can trust that God will have the last word in our lives as indeed God had the first, and it is the same word: Let there be life.

Excerpts from Abounding in Kindness by Elizabeth A. Johnson. (pp. 192-194)

Homily Starter: Bridget Mary Meehan

Reflection Question for shared homily:

What does Jesus' resurrection mean to you and to our world?

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

Kathryn : Do you promise to see what is good for your sisters and brothers everywhere, rejecting injustice and inequity and living with the freedom and responsibility of children of God?

Seth and All: Yes!

Kathryn: Do you promise to work for the realization of God's vision of harmony and right relations among people and peoples, rejecting the idols of money and property and color and sex and position?

Seth and All: Yes!

Kathryn: Do you promise to seek peace and live in peace in one human family, rejecting prejudice and half-heartedness in every form, and all barriers to unity?

Seth and All: Yes!

Kathryn: Do you promise to cherish the universe, and this precious planet, working creatively to renew and safeguard the elemental sacraments of air, earth, water?

Seth and All: Yes!

Kathryn: Do you believe in God, the great Spirit of Creation, in Jesus, the simple servant of justice and love who lived among us so that all might live with abundant fullness; in the breath of God's center, the Spirit who continues the work of forgiveness and reconciliation, birthing and blessing, challenge and hope, so that together we can continue the work of creation?

Seth and All: Yes!

(Source: Baptismal Promises: Jay Murnane)

Prayers of Community

Lee: That every person in this Mary Mother of Jesus community will experience your indwelling life and boundless love within them.

Lee and All: We hope in You

Lee : That your indwelling life will be that which we radiate to the world.

Lee and All: We hope in You

Lee : That your indwelling life will sustain all those who have poured out their own lives for those suffering in our world.

Lee and All: We hope in You

Lee : That your indwelling life will comfort those who have lost loved ones to violence and war and disease.

Lee and All: We hope in You

Lee : That your indwelling life will lift the fog that clouds understanding between people, allowing hate to dissipate and be transformed into life-giving love.

Lee and All: We hope in You

Lee : That your indwelling life will bloom as peace in families, in the workplace, in government and between nations.

Lee and All: We hope in You

Lee That your indwelling life in creation will be cherished by all on earth.

Lee All: We hope in You

Lee: We invite Joan Meehan to share requests from our community prayer list.

Lee: For what else do we pray?

(Please voice your petition)

Lee: For what else do we pray?

(Please voice your petition)

Lee and All: We hope in You.

Lee: Divine Healer, we share these prayers of our community, spoken and unspoken. We trust in your wisdom and healing love within us to enlighten and strengthen us. May it be so. **Amen.**

Liturgy of Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

Bridget Mary: Blessed are You, O Holy One, through Your divine providence we have this bread to offer, it will become for us the Bread of Life.

Bridget Mary and All: Blessed are You forever.

Beth P: Blessed are You, O Holy One, through your divine providence we have this wine to offer, it will become our spiritual drink.

and All: Blessed are You forever.

Jim B: Nurturing One, we are united in this sacrament by the love of Jesus in communion with all who proclaim the liberating power of your Spirit, rising in our midst.

Jim and All: Amen.

Preface: Eucharistic Prayer

Beth P: O Lover of All, You dwell in us.

Jim and All: And we dwell in You.

Beth P: O Pursuer of Justice, You speak truth through us,

Jim and All: In service to our sisters and brothers.

Beth P: O Source of All Life, in you we live and move and have our being,

Jim and All: All the days of our lives.

Beth P: Your Spirit, who raised Jesus from the dead, is rising up in our struggling world. Just as the Holy One enveloped Jesus at the end of the darkness of death, we too can trust that God will have the last word in our lives as indeed God had the first, as we join the angels, and saints and all people in joyful praise for the gift of life.

Holy, Holy, Holy (Karen Drucker) Linda Lee Miller <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orKBBIj5LZA>

Eucharistic Prayer

Jim B: O Heart of Love, Your Spirit moved through Mary of Magdala and the Easter women as they stood by the broken body of Jesus and encountered the Risen One. Your Spirit moves through us as we rise up in love to serve our sisters and brothers each day.

Please extend Your hands in blessing.

Bridget Mary and All:

As we bless this bread and wine, your Spirit of empowering grace is poured out anew upon these gifts to nourish and strengthen us.

We remember that on the night before he died, Jesus came to table with the women and men he loved. He took bread blessed and broke it, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body. Do this in memory of me."

Pause

Bridget Mary and All: After supper, Jesus poured a cup of wine and shared it with his friends, saying, "This is the cup of the covenant of my love. As often as You drink of it, remember me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Beth P and All:

Christ has died in all who have died.
Christ is rising within all living beings.
Christ comes again and again everywhere everyday.

Jim and All: Embracing Presence, we remember all the companions who have gone before us: Mary, Mother of Jesus, Mary of Magdala, and all holy women and men who rise up in loving service to transform our world. For it is through living as Jesus lived, and loving as he loved, that we awaken to Your Spirit empowering us to work for justice.

Great Amen by Linda Lee

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dy76fpfkNsg>

COMMUNION RITE

The Prayer of Jesus

Beth P: Let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Beth and All: O Holy One, you are 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 your 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**

Adapted, Miriam Therese Winter, MMS

Sign of Peace

Jim B. Jesus said to his disciples, "My peace I leave You. My peace I give You."

The peace of the Holy One is also with You.

Let us sing this beautiful song of peace especially for peace between Russia and Ukraine and all war-torn areas.

Peace Throughout the Land by Mindy Lou Simmons

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rmFnIrfSks>

Bridget Mary: Please join in praying the Litany for the Breaking of the Bread:

and All: Holy One, You call us to speak truth to power; we will do so.

Holy One, You call us to live the Gospel of healing and justice; we will do so.

Holy One, You call us to be Your presence in the world; we will do so.

: This is the bread of life and the cup of blessing. Blessed are we who are called to the table.

and All: We are the Body of Christ.

Communion Song

Arise, Three Altos, Video Denise Hackert Stoner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYgJqEmbE38>

Prayer after Communion

Beth P: Divine Presence, we are strengthened by sharing this Sacred meal as community. We go forth from this celebration to rejoice that Jesus came and lived among us, he taught us how to take his teaching and to apply them to the way we live in our world, reaching out to the outcast, caring for

the sick and the poor. Bless our efforts to live your ministry through good works and/or deep prayer. And together we say, **Amen**

Thanksgivings, Introductions and Announcements

Concluding Rite

Bridget M: The Holy One is within You.

Jim and All: And also within You.

Blessing

Bridget M and All: Please extend your hands as we pray our final blessing.

May we be the face of God to each other.

May we call each other to extravagant generosity!

We go forth with the energy of Spirit within us to heal and transform our church and world.

Closing Song: Dance Then Wherever You May Be

https://youtu.be/L6R6_Qz6_dU

Eucharistic Prayer written by Dr. Bridget Mary Meehan

NEW PO BOX:

Please send donations to:

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Please send intention for our community prayer book to Joan Meehan.

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