

MMOJ Liturgy- Christmas Eve- Dec. 24, 2023, Presiders: Bridget Mary Meehan and Beth Ponce, Readers: Anna Davis and Mary Al, Prayer Leaders: Jerry and Suzanne Bires, IT: Cheryl Brandi



THEME: CHRIST IS BORN THROUGH US

### **GREETING and WELCOME**

Beth: Welcome to Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community where everyone is welcome to share in our celebration of the Eucharist. Please have bread and wine/ juice nearby as we pray our Eucharistic prayer.

Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and of the Christ Presence in human hearts everywhere. Thomas Merton wrote: "Christ is born in us today in order that he may appear to the whole world through us." We gather at this holy meal to celebrate the Christ Presence born in us and through us each day.

Opening Song: Cedar mont Kids - Angels We Have Heard on High  
<https://youtu.be/oSJUwoXciBY>

### **Transformation Rite:**

Bridget Mary: Let us recall times we did not see the Christ Presence everywhere.  
*Pause for several moments of silent reflection as you place hand over your heart.*

For the times I failed to see Christ in my sisters and brothers and in creation.  
Bridget Mary and ALL: I am sorry, please forgive me, I thank you, I love you.

ALL: Sing Glory to God- Linda Lee Miller  
[https://youtu.be/dgn\\_8q1UWwk](https://youtu.be/dgn_8q1UWwk)

### **Opening Prayer:**

Beth: Emmanuel, God-with-us, we rejoice in your birth in Bethlehem and in your coming anew as the Presence of Christ within our souls. We are your dwelling place. We are now your Bethlehem. Like the angels and shepherds who were filled with

wonder long ago, we sing and dance for joy as we welcome you again and again, in the love that flows through us to others. Amen, Alleluia!

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

**Anna :**

First Reading: 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  
ALL: Thanks be to God.

Psalm Response: When Love Was Born - sung by Mark Schultz  
<https://youtu.be/aKSU9Dbxvrw>

Mary Al:

**Second Reading:** From Excerpts from A Sermon by Pastor Dawn Hutchins

In a world gone mad, in a world where we have yet to learn just how to love one another, Christ comes to us. When we are hurting, when we are in pain, when our world is darkest, Christ comes to us. When we are sick and tired. Christ comes to us. When we have given up and can no longer bear to hope. Christ comes to us. CHRIST is our GOD which is the LOVE taking on flesh and dwelling among us. Christ laughs with us, cries with us, rejoices with us, suffers with us, heals with us, walks with us, shouts with us, struggles with us and loves with us. That beautiful parable of Jesus' birth in the midst of deep darkness is the story of a child born to liberate people from fear. In that beautiful parable of Jesus' birth is the Cosmic truth of LOVE's power to burst forth even in the darkest of times.

For our GOD is the LOVE in which we live and move and have our being. Our GOD lives and breathes in, with, through, and beyond us. LOVE lives and breathes in, with, through, and beyond us.

Have no fear for LOVE is born over and over again, in us, among us, through us, and beyond us. Therein lies the hopes and fears of all the years, met in LOVE tonight. Come by here O LOVE, come by here. Come by here and help us to bring the good news of

great joy for all the people. Come by here and help us to sing Glory to God in the highest heaven and on Earth peace good will, and good health to all. Come by here O LOVE. Come by here. O LOVE come by here.

Do you hear what I hear? It is the sound of the SPIRIT of LOVE breathing in us. LOVE has come by here. LOVE has come by you. LOVE comes into the world day after day after day. Embrace LOVE, so that you can bring Good News of great joy. Joy to the world. For LOVE has come! You are ONE with the LOVE, which IS BEYOND, the BEYOND, and BEYOND that ALSO, our LOVER, BELOVED, and LOVE Itself! Merry Christmas! GOD has blessed us everyone! Amen.

These are the inspired words of Pastor Dawn Hutchins and we respond  
ALL: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Alle, Alle, Alleluia with Linda Lee Miller

<https://youtu.be/ID5UGWcS6Ws>

Beth:

**Gospel:** A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke 2:1-14

In those days, Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole Roman world. This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone went to register, each to the town of their birth. And so, Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to David's town of Bethlehem in Judea, because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David; he went to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was pregnant.

While they were there, the time came for her delivery. She gave birth to her firstborn and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them at the inn.

There were shepherds in the area living in the fields and keeping nightwatch by turns over their flock. The angel of God appeared to them, and the glory of God shone around them, they were very much afraid. The angel said to them, "You have nothing to fear! I come to proclaim good news to you - tidings of great joy to be shared by the whole people. This day in David's city, a savior - the Messiah - has been born to you. Let this be a sign to you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God and saying,

Glory to God in high heavens! And on earth, peace to those on whom God's favor rests.

These are the inspired words of the evangelist Luke. We respond

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Alle, Alle, Alleluia with Linda Lee Miller

<https://youtu.be/ID5UGWcS6Ws>

**Homily Starter:** Bridget Mary and Beth Ponce

A Meditation - Christ is born through us by Bridget Mary

[https://youtu.be/5Zd\\_c3vuP4M](https://youtu.be/5Zd_c3vuP4M)

BMM: Imagine that you were present in the stable with Mary and Joseph when Jesus was born.

Be aware of what you see, hear, or feel...

Like Jesus, Mary and Joseph who were forced to flee a ruler's terror, Christ is born today in refugee families, fleeing war and violence in their native lands...

Christ is born each day in the hungry, the homeless, the nobodies, the least and the last in our midst....

Christ is born through us when we visit the sick, comfort the grieving, and help those in need...

Christ is born through us when we look at life with eyes filled with child-like wonder...

Christ is born through us when we gather at table with family and friends to nourish one another...

Christ is born through us...when we listen to people with whom we disagree and treat them with respect....

Christ is born through us...when we welcome people of every race, nation and gender into a circle of love...

We rejoice this Christmas that we are Bethlehem where Christ is always welcome, loved and cherished!

**Community Sharing:** Share one way Christ is born anew through us/others in our world today.

**Statement of Faith:**

Jerry and ALL:

We believe in God who is creator and nurturer of all. We believe in Jesus, the Christ, who is our love, our hope, and our light. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of Wisdom Sophia, who energizes and guides us to build caring communities and to challenge injustices. We believe in the communion of saints our heavenly friends, who support us on life's journey. We believe in the partnership and equality of women and men in our church and world. We believe that all are one in the community of creation. We believe that God calls us to live fully, love tenderly, and serve generously. Amen.

*(Statement of Faith from Bridget Mary)*

### **Prayers of the Community: Suzanne**

: For a deeper realization of the Christ Presence working through us each day, we pray.  
Joan and ALL: May Christ be born anew in us each day.

: For good health, energy and vitality for ourselves and all for whom, we pray  
Joan and ALL: May Christ be born anew in us each day.

: For healing for the sick and comfort for the grieving, we pray  
Joan and ALL: May Christ be born anew in us each day.

: For our loved ones who have passed into God's eternal embrace, we pray.  
Joan and ALL: May Christ be born anew in us each day.

Joan Meehan shares Prayer Intentions in MMOJ book  
: and for what else do we pray?

## **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

### **Preparation of The Gifts**

*(All hold bread plate)*

Bridget Mary: Blessed are you, God of all Life. Through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you fruit of the earth, and work of human hands. It will become for us the bread of life.

ALL: Blessed by God forever.

*(All hold cup)*

Beth: Blessed are you, God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.

Mary Kay: Blessed by God forever.

### **PREFACE**

Jerry : God dwells in us.

ALL: And in all people everywhere.

Suzanne: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up in the joy of Divine Presence within us.

Jerry : Affirm the power of love within you and within all.

ALL: Alleluia

Jerry: With all creation and the angels and saints, we sing our hymn of praise:

We Are Holy – Linda Lee Miller

<https://youtu.be/orKBBlj5LZA>

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

Suzanne: Mothering 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 in Mary's womb, in a shining star, in humble shepherds, and in a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes.

Jerry: Today, we see the Christ Presence shining forth as pure love in the eyes of the elderly, in the service of care-givers, 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.

Invocation of the Holy Spirit:

*(raise hands toward bread and wine for Invocation of the Holy Spirit)*

Beth: We ritualize the Christ Presence born anew each day in us and in the entire cosmos as we pray:

All: Come Holy Spirit deepen your Presence within us and in these gifts of bread and wine.

Bridget Mary: Now, as we share the bread of life and lift the cup of blessing at this festive meal we pray:

**ALL: 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 for silent reflection*

**Beth 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."**

*Pause for silent reflection*

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

Suzanne: We remember the prophet and saints in every age, who, like candles in the night, illuminated the darkness of doubt with faith, courage and wisdom: Miriam and Moses, Mary, Mother of Jesus, and Joseph, and all our beloved family and friends. We recall the spiritual treasures they passed down to us through the ages.

Jerry: 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!

The Great Amen with Linda Lee Miller

<https://youtu.be/Dy76fpkNsg>

## COMMUNION RITE

### THE PRAYER OF JESUS

BMM: Let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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

### THE SIGN OF PEACE

Beth: Jesus, you said: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you. May we be the peace we wish to see in the world. Let us share a gesture of deep peace and justice with everyone in the circle of life as we bow toward you with hands folded, saying together:  
ALL: The peace of Christ be with you. Namaste, Namaste, Namaste.

### LITANY FOR THE BREAKING OF BREAD

BMM and ALL:

**Loving God, we are called to speak truth to power. We will do so.**

**Loving God, we are called to live the Gospel of peace and justice. We will do so.**

**Loving God, we are called to be Your presence in the world. We will do so.**

Beth and ALL:

We are the hands and feet of Christ in our world. All are invited to this banquet of love.

Beth : Receive the Bread of Life and Cup of Blessing.

ALL: Amen.

COMMUNION -- Meditation: Silent Night

"Silent Night, Each Holy Child" ~ Shaina Noll

<https://youtu.be/8mhXGwcty5c>

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

BMM: May your tender presence continue to open our hearts to the daily miracles of Christ Presence that surround us each day. May Christ be born anew through us in our world this Christmas and New Year!

ALL: Amen.

Welcome, Gratitude, and Announcements

CONCLUDING RITE

DISMISSAL

Beth: The Holy One is within you.

**ALL: May we sing and dance for joy as we celebrate every day as Christmas!**

BLESSING

*(everyone please extend your hands in mutual blessing)*

BMM: Let us rejoice that Christ is born anew through you and me in our world today. Go in peace and let the service continue.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

CONCLUDING HYMN: Joy to World - Music *(see new words!)*



“Sound Forth the News That Wisdom Comes”

<https://youtu.be/CSVdbI-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  
“Sound Forth the News That Wisdom Comes” calls us to co-create with Wisdom a world  
of justice, peace, equality, love, freedom, and joy. This Christmas carol comes with the  
hope that Wisdom will guide us to change our violent culture and to co-create with Her a  
peaceful world. Let us join together in our churches, communities, and home in [caroling  
for change.](#)”

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

If you want to add a prayer intention to our MMOJ Community Prayer book, please send  
an email to Joan Meehan. [jmeehan515@aol.com](mailto:jmeehan515@aol.com)

If you want to invite someone to attend our liturgy, please refer them our website  
at [marymotherofjesus.net](http://marymotherofjesus.net)

To support our community, please send your check to:

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