Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
Fourth Week of Easter/Earth Day Liturgy
April 20, 2024
Presiders: Kathryn Shea and Suzanne Bires
Readers: Andrea Seabaugh and Mary Al Gagnon
Prayer Leader: Lee Beyer
IT: Cheryl Brandi
Music Ministers: Linda and Rick Miller
Theme: Save Our Earth

Welcome and Gathering

Suzanne: Welcome to our Zoom liturgy at Mary Mother of Jesus, an inclusive Catholic Community where all are welcome.

-We invite you to pray the liturgy and respond where it says "All."

-All participants will be muted during the liturgy except for the presiders and readers.

Whoever you are,

Wherever you are,

Just as you are,

You are welcome at this table. (*Integral Christianity by Paul Smith*)

Let us now take a few minutes to collect ourselves as we prepare to focus our minds and our hearts on our knowledge that we are all one, brought together at this time on Earth to transform ourselves and our world through love; love for our Holy One, love for our neighbors, love for ourselves, and love for our planet.

Opening Song: Blue Boat Home by Peter Mayer
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhsXl1_rEwI

Opening Prayer

Kathryn: Sacred Spirit, as we celebrate Earth Day, we ask that you watch over this holy space that we live on and bring to it your growth, wisdom, strength, and protection. Let all who sit here be in peace with you, feel your holy inspiration and use it wisely in their lives to inspire and protect others. Creator God, we pray to you from the midst of your creation. We ask you to love and sustain this Earth; and to love and sustain us, who cling to it as it spins on its course through the cosmos. Teach us to love the Earth as you love it: help us not to take it for granted. And, may all who inhabit this land after we are gone be connected with you, Sacred Spirit, and recognize this as holy ground. ALL: Let it be so, and so it is. Amen

Rite of Transformation

Lee: We pause now to remember the times we have not born fruit in caring for self, others, and our planet Earth. Take a moment to recall one missed opportunity, one broken or damaged relationship. (Pause briefly and extend your hand over your heart)

Lee and ALL: As we ask for and receive forgiveness, we open our hearts to Infinite Love embracing and healing us. Let it be so! Alleluia!

A Joyful Gloria: Linda Lee Miller and graphics by Rick Miller

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lA5l0nODZI

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Mary Al: First Reading: A Reading from the Book of Genesis

God said, "Let us make humankind. Let them care for the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, the wild animals, and everything that crawls on the ground."

God blessed them and said, "Bear fruit, increase your numbers and fill the earth—and be responsible for it!"

God looked at all creation, and proclaimed that all was good, very good.

These are the inspired words of our ancestors and we affirm them by saying, Amen. *(adapted from the Inclusive Bible.)*

<u>Second Readings:</u> <u>Lee:</u> Reading 1: Earth – adapted from "A Spiritual Message" On Behalf of the National Indian Council on Aging

We pray for respect and love of Mother Earth because she is the foundation of human survival and we must keep her pollution-free for those who will travel after us. Protect her water, air, soil, trees, forests, plants and animals.

Do not just take and waste resources. Make it a priority to conserve.

The land is given to us by the Creator to care for, not to own. If we take care of the land, the land will take care of us.

<u>Andrea: Reading 2:</u> Today I offer an indigenous view of what many Native Americans refer to as Mother Earth from Black Elk who lived from 1863 to 1950. Black Elk, known amongst his people as Heȟáka Sápa, was a famous wičháša wakȟáŋ or <u>medicine man</u> and holy man of the Oglala <u>Lakota</u> and Sioux tribes.

In 1931 Black Elk spoke of one of his visions: "Then I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and round about beneath me was the whole hoop of the world. And while I stood there I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw; for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being. And I saw that the sacred hoop of my people was one of many hoops that made one circle, wide as daylight and as starlight, and in the center grew one mighty flowering tree to shelter all the children of one mother and one father. And I saw that it was holy."

In interpreting Black Elk's vision the "many hoops that made one circle" are the many peoples of the Earth and all living things. The tree is a key figure in the drama of life on Earth. Black Elk speaks to our relationship to each other and to all life that shares this one home. He stood on the mountain and could see that we are all connected orbiting around each other as the Earth orbits the Sun. He would also acknowledge that one tree standing together with others in a forest has the collective power to protect and shelter all living things on our planet.

So, on this Earth Day, take time to celebrate one of Earth's mightiest things – the tree. It springs from the soil and gives back of itself in many ways. It provides beauty, shade, habitat for countless creatures and the material to build our homes. Its' roots find footage in the ground and holds it close to keep it from washing away; and cleans the water we drink. It pulls harmful carbon dioxide from the air and stores it within its own body and even makes oxygen so we all can breathe.

From Black Elk's vision there is the power of one tree – imagine what an entire forest can do.

These are the inspired words of our indigenous peoples of the Earth and we respond by saying: AMEN.

<u>Suzanne: Gospel:</u> A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew

Look at the birds in the sky. They don't sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet the Holy One feeds them. Aren't you more important than they? Which of you by worrying can add a moment to your lifespan? And why be anxious about clothing? Learn a lesson from the way the wildflowers grow. They don't work; they don't spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in full splendor was arrayed like one of these. If the Holy One can clothe in such splendor the grasses of the field, which bloom today and are thrown on the fire tomorrow, won't the Holy One do so much more for you?

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

<u>Homily/Community Sharing</u>

<u>Communal Statement of Faith</u>

<u>Mary Al and ALL:</u> 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 God's Word, bringer of God's healing, heart of God's compassion, bright star in the firmament of God's prophets, mystics, and saints.
We believe that we are called to follow Jesus as a vehicle of God's love, a source of God's wisdom and truth, and an instrument of God's peace in the world.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, The life of God that is our innermost life,
The breath of God moving in our being, the depth of God living in each of us.

We believe that God's 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.

<u>Prayers of and for the Community</u>

<u>Lee:</u> We now bring our prayer intentions to the Table.

Our response is: <u>All: May our light bring healing in our world.</u>

We pray for all who continue to be impacted from all the natural disasters in our world. R

We pray for the people in all war-torn countries in our hurting world, most especially the children, that they may live in peace without fear and that goodness and sanity will fill the hearts and minds of those that would cause them harm. R

We pray that our government puts children above guns, power, and greed. R

We pray for our MMOJ intentions on our community prayer list. (Joan shares)

Our response is: All: May our light bring healing in our world.

For what else should we pray?

Our response is: All: May our light bring healing in our world.

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

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Kathryn: Gracious Wisdom, you embrace us with your extravagant affection in our times of both blessedness and weakness. You are always with us, carrying us, you living in us and we living in you. As we prepare for this sacred meal, we are aware of our call to serve, our call as your anointed ones to tend to the sick and dying, hold the hearts of those in emotional pain, and protect and defend the marginalized. In this festive meal, your Spirit is poured out on each of us, your anointed disciples, gathered together in this time and place. We also ask that your Spirit be spread to those of our community who are not with us today.

Let us rejoice as we sing:

All: Holy, Holy, Holy Linda Lee Miller

(adapted from Holy, Holy, Holy by Karen Drucker)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orKBBIj5LZA

Andrea: We thank you for the gift of Jesus of Nazareth in history -- and the gift of Jesus in faith. On earth, his life burned with the vision of his mission on earth. Through the example of his life – his teachings and actions - he showed us not only how we should live, but also what was worth even dying for.

Mary Al and All: When his time on earth had come to an end, Jesus – aware of and accepting his destiny – gave us his life for the values that he deeply believed, lived and taught…his conviction that love is stronger than death. And then, in providing an example of this wisdom for all people in ages to come, he opened wide his arms…and died. And the spirit that lived in Jesus resurrected him to a new life, a

promise made to all of us too who live the new story. Jesus is with us today and he will be through the end of time.

***(With an outstretched arm, we pray the consecration together*.**

Lee and ALL: We remember the gift that Jesus gave us on the night before he died. He gathered with his friends to share a final Passover meal. And it was at that supper that Jesus took bread, said the blessing and shared it with them saying: take this, all of you, and eat it. This bread is you; this bread is me. We are one body, the presence of God in the world. When you do this, remember me and all that I have taught you. This is the new and everlasting covenant.

[short pause]

Suzanne: In the same way, Jesus took a cup of wine, said the blessing and gave it to his friends saying: take this, all of you, and drink it. This wine is you; this wine is me. We are one blood, the presence of God in the world. When you do this, remember me and all that I have taught you. This is the new and everlasting covenant.

Andrea: Jesus, who was with God "in the beginning of the creation of the heavens and the earth," is with us now in this bread. The Spirit, of whom the prophets spoke in history, is with us now in this cup. Let us proclaim this mystery of faith.

Andrea and ALL: Jesus has died. Christ is risen. The Divine Presence lives in us and through us in the world today.

Mary Al: God, we know that you bless your church throughout the world. We, your people, ask for your grace that we may continually grow in our love and caring for Francis, our Pope, Bridget Mary, our Bishop and for everyone with whom we come in contact, especially those who live on the margins of church and society. They are all our brothers and sisters, members of your Blessed Family. We remember also all those, living and dead, who touched our lives and left their footprints on our hearts. We remember especially….*(mention names here, if you would like to..)*

Kathryn and All: We believe that the Spirit of God is at work in and among us and will do more than we could ever ask or imagine. We believe that it is through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, Creator God, forever and ever.

Great Amen: Linda Lee Miller

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

The Prayer of Jesus

Suzanne and ALL: Let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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:

Andrea: ***Eternal wellspring of peace-***

May we be drenched with the longing for peace

That we may give ourselves over

As the earth to the rain, to the dew,

Until peace overflows our lives

As living waters overflow the seas. **(Marcia Falk)**

Jesus said to his disciples, "My peace I leave you. My peace I give you." Let us now extend a sign of peace to one another as we say, "Namaste, Namaste, Namaste."

Suzanne: Please join in praying the Litany for the Breaking of the Bread:

Suzanne 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.

Mary Al: This is the bread of life and the cup of blessing. Blessed are we who are called to Christ's table.

Mary Al and All: What we have heard with our ears, we will live with our lives. As we share communion, we become communion, both Love's nourishment and Love's challenge.

Please receive/share Eucharist now, saying: "You are the heart of the Earth." And "You are the soul of the world."

Communion Song: Earth
E A R T H (M83 - Outro) - YouTube

Introductions/Thanksgiving/Announcements

Prayer after Communion

Suzanne: Prayer for All the World by Linda Jones

Compassionate and Loving One,
you created the world for us all to share,
a world of beauty and plenty.
Create in us a desire to live simply
so that our lives may reflect your generosity.

Breath of Life,
you gave us responsibility for the earth,
a world of riches and delight.
Create in us a desire to live sustainably
so that those who follow after us
may enjoy the fruits of your creation.

Source of Peace and Justice,
you give us the capacity to change,
to bring about a world that mirrors your image.
Create in us a desire for solidarity
so that the pillars of injustice crumble
and those now crushed are set free.

ALL: Amen. Let it be so.

Community Blessing

Kathryn: Let us raise our hands and pray our blessing:

May we have the wisdom to care for the earth.
May we act now for the good of future generations and all Your creatures. May we be instruments of a new creation, founded on the covenant of Your love. Amen.

Closing Song: Earth We're In It Together- Earth Were In It Together (youtube.com)

If you would like to add your intercession to our MMOJ Community Prayers book, Please send an email to jmeehan515@aol.com
If you would like to invite another person to attend our liturgy please refer them to www.marymotherofJesus.org where the day's liturgy is found. Zoom instructions are also included there.

Please send donations to: Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
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