

MMOJ Liturgy 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sunday of Easter, April 13, 2024,  
Presider: Bridget Mary Meehan and Joan Meehan  
Readers: Mary Montavon and Jack, McKillip, Prayer Leaders: Beth and David Ponce, IT  
Cheryl Brandi



*Mary Mother of John Mark*

<https://mnojliturgies.blogspot.com/2024/04/mnoj-liturgy-3rd-sunday-of-easter.html>

### **Welcome and Gathering Rites**

Presider : Joan M.

Welcome to our Zoom liturgy at Mary Mother of Jesus, an inclusive Catholic Community that embraces diversity, works for justice, equality and the empowerment of all people. We are called to be witnesses of Easter joy in an All-Embracing love that makes us one.

**Gathering Song:** Birdtalk: One  
<https://youtu.be/Xrv9KmyQAPU>

### **Communal Transformation Rite**

Presider : Bridget Mary

As we gather at this table of abundant love and gracious care in memory of Jesus, we pause now to remember a time we did not nurture others with kindness and compassion. Take a few moments to recall one missed opportunity...

*(Pause briefly)*

Let us pause and remember the power of divine love within us to do good, right wrongs and heal wounds. Now imagine persons, or a situation in need of reconciliation and healing.

*(Pause briefly and hold them in the Heart of Love within you.)*

All: We are sorry, please forgive us, we love you, we thank you.

**Gloria: Christopher Grundy**

<https://youtu.be/w7ykbXZUCOw>

**Opening Prayer:**

Presider : Joan M

We rejoice that the Holy Mystery, the Lover of All, the Beloved, and the Breath of Love is with us, within us and beyond us. We rejoice in our precious memories of table hospitality and all-embracing love. May we be a reflection of tender compassion, wisdom, strength and courage to all whom we encounter especially those most in need.

All: Amen

### **Liturgy of the Word**

Reader 1: Mary M.

Our First Reading is Acts 12:11-17

The Holy One sent an angel and rescued Peter from Herod's vicious little production and the spectacle the Jewish mob was looking forward to. Still shaking his head, Peter went to Mary's house, the Mary who was John Mark's mother. The house was packed with praying friends. When he knocked on the door to the courtyard, a young woman named Rhoda came to see who it was. But when she recognized his voice- Peter's voice!

– she was so excited and eager to tell everyone Peter was there that she forgot to open the door and left him standing in the street.

But they wouldn't believe her, dismissing her report. "You're crazy," they said. She stuck by her story, insisting. They still wouldn't believe her and said, "It must be an angel." All this time poor Peter was standing out in the street knocking away. Finally, they opened up and saw him- and went wild! Peter put his hands up and calmed them down.. He described how God had gotten him out of jail and then said, "Tell James and the others what's happened." He left them and went off to another place.

These are the sacred words of the author of Acts adapted from the Messenger by Eugene Peterson and we affirm them by saying:

All: Amen

Responsorial Psalm:  
I Will Sing of Your Love, Love, Love by Christopher Grundy  
<https://youtu.be/AUyjdGNIYH4>

Reader 2: Jack McK:

Our Second Reading is from WomenWord by Miriam Therese Winter

It is generally accepted that Mary, Mother of John Mark was host to a house church in Jerusalem. It has been suggested that those who gathered with her were a group of Hellenists who differed from the Jewish Christians that gathered around James. Some feel very strongly that she was in charge of a church that met at her house and that she most likely presided at its Eucharist. She was independently wealthy, had a large home, and servants, and was the mother of John Mark who was a cousin to Barnabas. (Col 4:10). She may also have been a widow. The fact that scripture records her name attests to her importance in the Jerusalem community, as does the fact that Peter went straight to her place following his escape from prison, where he charged her and those who were fathered there with reporting the news of his safety to James, the head of the Jerusalem church. Mary, not only knew Peter personally, but through her son also had access to Paul.

It is possible that her home served as the headquarters of the Jerusalem church. Peter seems to have been there often enough so that even the maid recognizes him simply by the sound of his voice. Rhoda was a female servant in the household of Mary, the mother of John Mark. Late one night she heard a persistent knocking. When she discovered it was Peter, she became so flustered, she left him standing at the gate.

These are the sacred words of Miriam Therese Winter and we affirm them by saying,

All: AMEN.

Alleluia: Jan Phillips  
<https://youtu.be/IC4nbwmQDVw>

Presider: 2 Joan M

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke 24:35-48

The two disciples recounted what had taken place on the way, and how Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of bread.

While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have."

And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them.

He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

These are the sacred words of the Gospel writer known as Luke and we affirm them by saying:

All: Amen

Homily Starter: Bridget Mary

In our first two readings, we take a trip down our Christian story's memory lane.

Here we meet Mary Mother of John Mark, a coworker of Paul and an aunt or cousin of Barnabas. Scholars believe that Greek Christians- not the Hebrew Christians associated with James -met her home and that she was a leader of one of the house churches in Jerusalem. She is depicted as presiding at the "breaking of the bread" in early Eucharistic celebrations.

Let us not miss the chaotic hilarious scene of Rhoda seeing a newly escaped from prison Peter knocking at the gate, leaving him knocking to tell everyone, and no one believe her until they go and see for themselves! This reminds me of one of my favorite sayings: "Embrace the imperfections, the chaos, the "holy mess" of your beautiful life!

The text makes it evident that women and men in the early Christian movement formed a praying community. No longer was there a woman's court and the court of Israel, "where many were praying." There was a major break with custom which reflected the influence of Jesus. Janice Nunnally Cox observes "The house of Mary and the other women's houses are revolutionary; they house dissidents, they break custom; they initiate new worship, they continue the teachings of Jesus."

Today we, in the emerging church, are initiating new paradigms of prayer and Christian community. Here are two ways this is happening in the inclusive and loving ministry of our sister, Elena, who shared these pictures and stories of the sharing of a meal, the breaking of bread and holding a baby in the Risen One's All Nurturing Love.



The first picture was taken at a nursing home where Elena visits Clare and Hank, a married couple of many years on a regular basis.

Elena picks up Hank at his Memory Care Unit and they walk over to his wife's Clare's room in the Hospice Care Area. There they visit together for a while and share Communion. Afterwards, Elena and Hank walk back to his room.

Like the apostles in the story who met Jesus in the sharing of a meal, Hank, Clare and Elena encounter the Risen One at each visit of "holy communing".



Elena volunteers to hold high risk babies in a neonatal unit. This ministry is a beautiful reflection of the All-Embracing Divine Love that holds us close every moment of life. Every time, we reach out in love, to touch, hold, embrace another, we are the hands and feet of the Risen Christ in our world. In this love, we are one!

Let us close with beautiful video "It is Love that Matters" by Sister Illia Delio

It is Love that Matters with Illia Delio

[https://youtu.be/DG\\_CIHDM4SY](https://youtu.be/DG_CIHDM4SY)

Community Sharing: What did you hear in our readings, homily, meditation that inspired you today?

**Communal Statement of Faith**

Prayer Leader 1: Beth and All

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 the Divine Word,  
bringer of healing, heart of Divine compassion,  
bright star in the firmament of the Holy One's  
prophets, mystics, and saints.

We believe that We are called to follow Jesus  
as a vehicle of divine love,  
a source of wisdom and truth,  
and an instrument of peace in the world.

We believe in the Spirit of the Holy One,  
the life that is our innermost life,  
the breath moving in our being,  
the depth living in each of us.

We believe that the Divine 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.

### **Prayers of the Community**

Prayer Leader 2: David

As we prepare for this sacred meal we are aware of our call to serve, and just as Jesus did. We bring to this table our prayers for the community. Please feel free to voice your prayers beginning with the words "I bring to the table...."

(Joan Meehan shares MMOJ Book of Intentions)

*Prayers for the community are offered.*

Closing Prayer: Prayer Leader 2: David  
We pray for these and all unspoken intentions. Amen.

### **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

#### **Preparation of the Gifts:**

Presider : Bridget Mary

Blessed are You, Holy One, through Your divine providence we have this bread, to share, the Bread of Life.

All: Blessed are You, Holy One, forever.

Presider : Joan M.

Blessed are You, O Loving One through Your divine providence we have this wine to share, our spiritual drink.

All: Blessed are, You, Holy One, forever.

Presider: Bridget Mary

Nurturing One, we are united in this sacrament by the love of Christ, whose presence we are as we proclaim the liberating power of your Spirit Sophia, in our humanity and divinity, calling us to build the unity of Love in a more compassionate and just world. All: Amen.

## **Eucharistic Prayer**

Prayer Leader 1: Beth :

The Holy One is within us.

Prayer Leader 2: David and All:

And within all living beings.

Prayer Leader 1: Beth:

Lift up your hearts.

Prayer Leader 2: David and All:

We celebrate the divine presence within and all around.

Prayer Leader 1: Beth Welcoming One in you, with you and through your endless outpouring of grace, we are blessed with joy amidst the wrong and suffering of our world. We are blessed when we break bread together and cry out for justice.

Prayer Leader 2: David

Generous Giver, you give us wise companions on our journey who work for humanity's healing and well-being and for the flourishing of all creation. With thankful hearts, in the company of all holy women and men, your liberating Spirit rises up within us, works through us and we sing:

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

<https://youtu.be/orKBB1j5LZA>

Prayer Leader 1: Beth

Conscious of the oneness we share and the inequity that exists in our world, we pray that we may serve others with generous hearts especially those in need of tender, loving care and the basic necessities of life. The bread we break and the cup we share are symbols of the love that we are invited to share at every table and in every encounter.

*(Please extend Your hands in blessing and pray together)*

Prayer Leader 2: David

As we bless this bread and wine, we are ever aware of Your Spirit in us and among us at this Eucharistic table. We remember our brother Jesus whose life and teachings lifts us from bondage and frees us to love tenderly, walk humbly and do justice.

Presider: Bridget Mary and All: (hold bread in hand)

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

(pause)

Presider: Joan M. and All: ( hold cup in hands)

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."

Prayer Leader 1 Joan and All:

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died in all those who have passed away from violent hate crimes.

Christ is rising in all those working for the well-being of humanity, dismantling institutional sexism, racism and all that divides us.

Christ comes each day in our ministry, prayers and actions for a renewed world with justice and equity for all.

Prayer Leader 2: Beth

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 are rising up in loving service to those in need. We pause now to remember our family and loved ones who have gone before us especially those whose lives were witnesses to selfless love generous service....(pause)

*(Presiders and all hold bread and wine)*

Prayer Leader: David and All:



For it is through living as Jesus lived, and loving as he loved, that we awaken to Your Spirit empowering us to work for the flourishing of life for all people and for planet Earth.

All: Great Amen (Sung) Linda Lee Miller  
<https://youtu.be/Dy76fpfkNsg>

### **Communion Rite**

Presider: Joan M. and All:

#### The Prayer of Jesus

Gracious Spirit,  
Who loves us like a mother,  
Whose realm is blooming among us now.  
And within.  
We pray that your compassion guide us in every action.  
Give us what we need for each day,  
and help us to be satisfied with the miracle of that alone.  
Forgiver, whose embrace brings us to wholeness without our asking, may we reconcile ourselves to one another in humility.  
And may we cancel the crushing debts that imprison our neighbors, so that communities of joy and health may flourish.  
May we neither profit from nor ignore evil.  
But ever work to thwart it with non-violence, as we co-create the realm of peace in this world, now and each day.  
Amen. (*Bret Hesla/wsj*)

Sign of Peace: (*Offer one another a gesture of peace.*)  
Namaste  
<https://youtu.be/Hxf8QFTkYY8>

#### Litany for the Breaking of the Bread

Presider: Bridget Mary and All:

Please join in praying the Litany for the Breaking of the Bread 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.

Presider :Joan (*hold bread and cup up*)

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

Presider: Joan M and All:

We are the Body and Blood of Christ for the world.

(Please receive/share Eucharist now saying You are the Body of Christ.)

Communion Meditation Song: Only Love by Jordan Smith

<https://youtu.be/Xrv9KmyQAPU>

### Prayer After Communion

Presider: Bridget Mary

We go forth, nourished at this banquet table, to be love in the world. May, we know Jesus in the depths of our hearts and, experience the Risen One's strength within us, enabling us to live as courageous, compassionate witnesses to the Gospel every day. May we give thanks for all mothers especially our own mothers.

Community Thanksgiving, Introductions and Announcements

### Concluding Rite

Presider : Joan M

The Holy One is within You. As you go forth to continue your ministry for justice and equality, and peace for all life and earth itself, may you be a radiant reflection of the Risen Christ in our world. Please extend Your hands as we pray our final blessing.

Presider: Bridget Mary and All

We go forth as apostles, to share the good news that infinite love lives within us, and, accompanies us in our sufferings and struggles and strengthens us with the full authority of the Holy Spirit to love tenderly, do justice and walk humbly in service of our sisters and brothers. Amen Alleluia

We' Going Rise Up by Maggie Wheeler

<https://youtu.be/jPXHphr0tT0?si=ozrHkydHHKenAc89>

### **Eucharistic Prayer written by Dr. Bridget Mary Meehan**

NEW PO BOX:

Please send donations to:

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community

5342 Clark Road #3079

Sarasota, FL 34233

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

Jmeehan515@aol.com

Our website:

[www.marymotherofjesus.net](http://www.marymotherofjesus.net)