Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community

21ST Sunday of Extra-Ordinary Time
August 24, 2024

Presiders: Beth Ponce and Kathryn Shea
Readers: Mary Al Gagnon and Jeanne Schmidt
Music Ministers: Linda and Rick Miller
IT: Michael Rigdon

Theme: Keep the Faith

Welcome and Gathering

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

Please have bread and wine/juice and a candle nearby as we pray our Eucharistic prayer.

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 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. Let us begin our liturgy by expressing this love through song.

Gathering Song: Come To The Table by the Choses
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEpMhdoJ_VA

Opening Prayer

Kathryn: In the name of our Creator, Jesus our brother, and Holy Spirit Wisdom, we gather to celebrate our oneness with and in you and in all things. This Great Mystery is the foundation and template for the entire universe, and when fully experienced, has the capacity to change everything. We seek to fully understand this Great Mystery, but more importantly to understand how we live it in our lives. Let our ears hear, our eyes see, and our hearts receive as we remember and expand the power of love on Earth. During these dark days, which are getting lighter every day, we live with the certainty that you walk with us, Infinite One. We continue to awaken to the fullness of grace consciousness; united as one people, one planet, one universe, expressing unconditional love toward all living things. We know you are here with us as we walk together as companions on this journey and as we keep the faith.
ALL: Amen

Rite of Transformation

Beth: 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)
Beth 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=_IA5I0nODZI

Liturgy of the Word

Mary Al: First Reading: an excerpt from *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teachings of Jesus* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama (adapted)

It is important to consider the metaphor of light, which is a common image in all the major religious traditions. In the Buddhist context, light is particularly associated with wisdom and knowledge; darkness is associated with ignorance and a state of misknowledge. This corresponds to the two aspects of the path: there is the method aspect, which includes such practices as compassion and tolerance, and the wisdom, or knowledge, aspect, the insight penetrating the nature of reality. It is the knowledge, or wisdom, aspect of the path that is the true antidote to dispelling ignorance.

Since many passages also seem to point out the importance of faith in one's spiritual practice, I think it might be useful here to give some explanation of the Buddhist understanding of faith. The Tibetan word for faith is day-pa, which perhaps might be closer in meaning to confidence, or trust. In the Buddhist tradition, we speak of three different types of faith. The first is faith in the form of admiration that you have toward a particular person or a particular state of being. The second is aspiring faith. There is a sense of emulation; you aspire to attain that state of being. The third type is the faith of conviction.

I feel that all three types of faith can be explained in the Christian context as well. For example, a practicing Christian, by reading the Gospel and reflecting on the life of Jesus, can have a very strong devotion to and admiration for Jesus. That is the first level of faith, the faith of admiration and devotion. After that, as you strengthen your admiration and faith, it is possible to progress to the second level, which is the faith of aspiration. In the Buddhist tradition, you would aspire to buddhahood. In the Christian context you may not use the same language, but you can say that you aspire to attain the full perfection of the divine nature, or union with God. Then, once you have developed that sense of aspiration, you can develop a deep conviction that it is possible to perfect such a state of being. That is the third Faith: level of faith. I feel that all of these levels of faith are equally applicable in both the Buddhist and Christian contexts.

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

Mary Al: Gospel Reading: John 6:60-69
Many of Jesus' disciples who were listening said,
"This saying is hard; who can accept it?"
Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this,
he said to them, "Does this shock you?
What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending
to where he was before?
It is the spirit that gives life,
while the flesh is of no avail.
The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and life.
But there are some of you who do not believe."
Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe
and the one who would betray him.
And he said,
"For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me
unless it is granted him by my Father."

As a result of this,
many of his disciples returned to their former way of life
and no longer accompanied him.
Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?"
Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
We have come to believe
and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."

These are the inspiring words of the Gospel writer known as John and we affirm them by saying: ALL: Amen.

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

Homily Starter and Community Sharing

Communal Statement of Faith

Beth and ALL: Together let us profess our Faith.

We believe in our Creator who has not forgotten us, rather is ever and always present with us.

We believe in Jesus, the Word incarnate, who journeyed on the earth, blessing the sick, making whole the broken, healing many, instilling faith in his followers so that they may continue the work He began.

We believe in Christ, the everlasting Presence in our world in our universe.

We believe in the Spirit of Life, the breath of wisdom Sophia, who stays present and real to us during this great human struggle we face today and in the days ahead.

We believe in the communion of saints, our heavenly friends who walk with us in love as we continue our life journey.

We believe in one another and our individual and collective response to being diligent in following the directives given by medical professionals at this time.

We believe in the partnership and equality of women and men in our Church and our world. Here we live our prophetic call of Gospel equality.

We believe that 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.

Beth: We pray that the Holy One renew in our hearts our commitment to journey always in faith and hope as we reach out and support, comfort and love those closest to us, those who live in our country and all the people of the earth.

Prayers of and for the Community

Mary Al: We now bring our prayer intentions to the Table, saying, "I bring to the Table…"

Our response is: Our faith sustains us.

We pray for all those suffering as a result of the natural disasters taking place on our planet.
Response: Our faith sustains us.

We pray for all who are suffering, lonely, and without faith or hope.
Response: Our faith sustains us.

We pray for all those living in the conditions of war and fear.
Response: Our faith sustains us.

We pray for the intentions in our MMOJ community prayer list. (Joan shares)
Response: Our faith sustains us.

And, for what else should we pray?

Response: All: Our faith sustains us.

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

Presentation of the Bread and Wine

Jeanne: Gracious God, you have set the banquet table and have invited all of us to a feast of unending delight. Blessed are You, Holy One, through Your divine providence we have this bread, to share, the Bread of Life.

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

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

Mary Al and All: Blessed are, You, Holy One, forever.

Jeanne: Let us lift up our hearts.

Jeanne and All: We lift them up to the Holy One, abiding with us and loving through us.

Eucharistic Prayer

Beth: Gracious Wisdom, you embrace us with your extravagant affection in our times of both blessedness and weakness. Even though we have times of doubt, we know You are always with us…you living in us and we living in you. In this festive meal, your Spirit is poured out on each of us gathered

in the circle of your friends and disciples, 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

Kathryn: 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.

Beth: 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.

Beth: 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]

Kathryn: 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.

Kathryn: 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.

Kathryn 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..)*

Jeanne 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

COMMUNION RITE

The Prayer of Jesus

Beth: 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:

Mary Al: *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."

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

Jeanne 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.

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

Beth and All: May we live as the Body of Christ in the world, serving all in need, especially those living on the margin.

Kathryn: Please receive/share Eucharist now, saying: "You are the bread of life." And "You are the cup of compassion."

Communion Song: I'll Walk Beside You
I'll Walk Beside You (youtube.com)

Introductions/Thanksgiving/Announcements

Closing Community Prayer

Beth: Holy One, may our faith grow stronger with each breath we take; faith in ourselves, faith in each other, faith in all that is holy, and faith that our world can and will be healed. Timeless One, Your eternal love wraps courage around us as we enter into your invitation to dance and to bring your Light into the world. Your ageless presence draws us to you as we step forward, ready to embrace where you lead us. Your sustaining peace rests within our every heartbeat and accompanies us into the unknown future. We have no fear, for we live with the assurance that you are always in us and we in you. We are forever grateful to live in your presence and your love. Amen.

Closing Community Blessing

Kathryn: And together with our arms extended we bless one another and commit to healing our hurting world:

May our lives radiate the light of the Holy One. May we have the courage to speak truth to justice in our church and in our world. May we be humble enough to be like children in receiving the kin-dom of Great Mystery. May we have the faith to know, that we too, can do the impossible and may we be a blessing in our time and the Face of God to all whom we meet.

ALL: Thanks be to all that is holy! Amen and Alleluia!

Closing Song: Go Light Your World -Kathy Troccoli
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVqR6kTu8lE

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.net where the day's liturgy is found. Zoom instructions are also included there.

Please support our community, send your check to:

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