Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
Celebration of the Season of Creation Third Week
September 14, 2024
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Cathy Alexander, Joan Pesce, Elena Garcia ARCWP
I Team: Cheryl Brandi
Theme: TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION
Seeds of Hope and first fruits of the Spirit
Look and Listen

Join Zoom Meeting

https://zoom.us/j/93473708926?pwd=VHFKZGJ5N3ljbzZtVU1qQVRZY1lodz09

Meeting ID: 934 7370 8926
Passcode: 552967

(Maryal)
If we learn how to listen, we can hear in the voice of creation a kind of dissonance. On the one hand, we can hear a sweet song in praise of our beloved Creator; on the other, an anguished plea, lamenting our mistreatment of this our common home.

Welcome

(Elena) Welcome to Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community! All are welcome to participate with us this afternoon in this liturgy which celebrates the third week of the Season of Creation
Whoever you are, wherever you are, just as you are, you are welcome at this table!

GREETING AND CALL TO WORSHIP
(Elena) ~ Come, let us worship God, who gifted us with life and Creation to sustain life**.**
All: We praise God for the wondrous Creation.
~Come, let us follow Jesus The Christ, who inspires us to hope and act for justice and righteousness**.**

All: We give glory to God, who restores the groaning Creation and the vulnerable.
~Come let us move with the Holy Spirit, striving to establish justice and produce the first fruits of hope.
All: We praise God for the abundant life that is assured to all Creation.

(Maryal) Heavenly Triune God and Creator of all, we gather here. Made in your image. You created in love.
We gather in the name of the redeemer, our Savior Jesus Christ, Who reconciles all of Creation.
We gather in the presence of the life Giver, your Holy Spirit, Who inspires new life and instills hope.
(World Council of Churches, Eco-School at the Orthodox Academy of Crete, Greece, 11-18 November 2023)

(Maryal) Let us begin by Blessing the name of God, God of our ancestors, God of the generations yet to come. Blessed be the Creating God, Redeeming Son and the Sustaining Spirit. As we gather, we hear the groans of Creation and the cries of our sisters and brothers. As we gather, we bring our seeds of hope, the first fruits of the Spirit. **(Rev Sikawu, Central Methodist Church, Cape Town)**

Gathering Song: Christopher Grundy "As the Moon " (*Stop at 2:34*)
https://youtu.be/qkDwd0uv178?si=Ytzq5qKEJHcs5tnD

RITE OF TRANSFORMATION
(Bob) ~ Eternal God, the whole world is full of your glory.
We bear forth the anguish of Creation in the time of the climate crisis to you. In your grace, grant us the opportunity to do good, as your created co-creators.
All: Christ have mercy.

~Jesus Christ, you have walked the Earth and lived in our midst.
Make us sensitive to the suffering of humankind and the entire creation.
Strengthen us in our endeavors to create a life of dignity,
in justice, and solidarity with those who live and will live.
All: **Christ have mercy.**

~Holy Spirit, power of courage and self-control, you speak to our consciences.
Comfort us when we suffer and are plagued by anxiety.
Make us worry when we are numb in the calmness of complacency. Re-create us

to become what we are: one humanity under the same sky.
All: Christ have mercy.
(Adapted from "Prayer for the Climate" from the "Bishops's Letter for the Cli- mate" of the Church of Sweden)

(Elena)
We are called to acknowledge our contribution, smaller or greater, to the disfigurement and destruction of Creation.
Let us remember we are born in Divine Blessing and that we are perfect in the Holy One's eyes. Let us also realize, and forgive ourselves, for not always acting in ways of Divine Blessing, both towards ourselves and others. Now, let us imagine all of the ways we can be brightly lit by a love that heals and transforms us as we evolve and grow in awareness of our divinity and our humanity. (*Pause for several moments)*
(Elena) *As we extend a hand over our hearts let us together express words of Repentance*:
All: I love you. I am sorry. Please forgive me. Thank you.

SHARING OF PEACE
(Bob)
It is fitting that, having asked for Divine and mutual forgiveness, we now extend an expression of Peace to each other.
If we are in Christ, we are becoming a new creation.
We see God around us. We see God within us.
We give thanks to our Creator.
Let us show the caring nature The Holy One has instilled within us
by greeting each other with a sign of
God's peace, love, forgiveness and grace.
The peace of our Creator be with us in all things.
All: Namaste 🙏 Namaste 🙏 Namaste 🙏
(adapted from Celebrating Creation: Honoring Indigenous People, Kelly Sherman-Conroy)

THANKSGIVING FOR THE EARTH
(Pat) God of Holy Dreaming, great Creator Spirit, from the dawn of Creation you have given your children the good things of our mothering Earth. You spoke and the gum tree grew. In the vast desert and the dense forest, and in the cities and at the water's edge, Creation sings your praise. Your presence endures at the rock, at the heart of our land. Lead us on, Great Spirit, as we gather from the four corners of the Earth; enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt and shame

of the past into the full day that has dawned in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**
(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Liturgical Resources)

A GLORIA

Glory To The Lamb by Fernando *Ortega* ***(Stop at 2:29)***
https://youtu.be/9gaFm-MpxBw?si=zUiZyNsGTRmHtXN9

LITURGY OF THE WORD

(Bob) LOOKING IS AN ACT OF LOVE
We were lovers who … decided to make the world a better place by slowing down long enough to pay for its improvement—by paying attention, the reverent, even holy attention of love. —**Brian McLaren,** ***The Galápagos Islands***
Brian McLaren considers how paying attention to tortoises is a form of love.

At each place, [my companions and I] experienced sustained moments of shared, focused attention, so shared and so focused that we forgot ourselves. For significant periods of time, we were drawn out of ourselves into the observation of another, as in another species.
We were thoroughly engrossed by tortoises….

There they were—there *we* were. Intrigued. Drawn in. Enchanted. For minutes, even hours at a time. Whether in the wild or in a breeding center, we surrendered ourselves to them, to their habits, their pace, their well-being, to seeing the world in light of their needs and interests. We had given our hearts to these unique creatures that are unique features of this unique world.
The great novelist Marilynne Robinson was once asked by an interviewer, "What single thing would make the world in general a better place?" She replied, "Loving it more." [1] And then the revelation comes: in loving these unique creatures that are unique features of this unique world, we were making the world better.

I do not doubt this in even one neural synapse of my brain....
Our attentive experience of self-forgetfulness and whole-hearted tortoise observation was, in a real way, ecstatic. We were taken out of ourselves in the

contemplation of a creature so different from us in many ways, yet like us in others. We had fallen out of our normal concerns and into love, you might say. Or risen into love. Or embarked upon it. Or leapt into it. Perhaps the old phrase (thanks, Kierkegaard!) "leap of faith" … would be better rendered a *leap of love*.

I know that both Jesus and Saint Paul said that our faith would save us. And I get that. But I wonder if it is equally true to say that if we are to be saved, it will not be by faith alone but by love as well. After all, didn't Jesus say that love is the one greatest command, and didn't Paul say that without love, nothing else we have (including faith that moves mountains) amounts to a hill of beans?... Maybe love includes as a given the kind of faith that really matters. That would certainly be the case if another voice in the New Testament was correct when he said, without qualification, "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them" (1 John 4:16).

Could that be why … [many people] join one another, and perhaps even join their Creator, in loving these creations, these tortoises…? I gaze with human benevolence and with a deeper human awareness … of our profound, inescapable kinship. I gaze with love. And somehow, the world is made a little better. Inspired words written by Brian McLaren and Found in Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations

(Pat) Psalm Response 119 ***(*Nan Merrill *Psalms for Praying,* adaptation*)***
Response All: GUIDE MY STEPS ACCORDING TO YOUR WISDOM
Pat: ~Breathe on me, O Breath of Inspiration, in the silence of my tranquil heart, infill me with your wisdom. O, that I might radiate the compassion and peace, the truth and beauty of the Beloved.
All: GUIDE MY STEPS ACCORDING TO YOUR WISDOM

~Direct my steps, O holy One, that I might humbly walk with you. The unfolding of your Way gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple. Guide my steps according to your Wisdom, and show me how to lovingly co-create with you.
All: GUIDE MY STEPS ACCORDING TO YOUR WISDOM

~May your face shine upon your friend, as You teach me of Love. I weep over our wounded world, our earth ravaged by greedy, insensitive hands.
All: GUIDE MY STEPS ACCORDING TO YOUR WISDOM

🎵 🎶 Alle, Alle, Alléluia.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ID5UGWcS6Ws

GOSPEL— (Maryal) This reading is found in Matthew Fox's "Creativity." It is meant to awaken us to creation's call to release our creative powers, a gift bestowed on all humankind, and thus choose to work as one to assure our survival and sustainability as a species.

Gospel Reading: (Cathy)

Where does our hope lie? Where shall we ground ourselves for continuing on and changing our ways radically? Can we be confident that creativity is the key to our survival and sustainability as a species? Creativity is who we are, creativity can redeem and save our species. I agree with Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes that, "All women and men are born gifted." All we need to do is release this creativity, get out of its way, as M.C. Richards used to say. Estes also believes that " a woman's creative ability is her most valuable asset. I believe this is true of men as well. It is the most valuable asset of our species.

What are we waiting for? Let us remove the obstacles, let go of the guilt, and get moving. We have nothing to lose but our pessimism and cynicism, as Otto Rank warned us, "pessimism comes with the repression of creativity." Creativity is not in short supply. There is an abundance of it, plenty to go around. It has always been this way. From the original fireball to the birth of the atoms, galaxies, supernovas, stars, sun, planets, earth and her marvelous creatures. We humans are latecomers to the creative universe, but we are powerfully endowed with creativity.

Some of my hope comes from the realization of how perilous our situation is on this planet. As more and more people get out of denial and the addictions denial puts us in and come to realize the danger that our unsustainable species is in, there will be action and there will be grounds for hope. This sounds paradoxical, and it is: Our very despair is a cause of hope, for despair often results in breakdown, and breakdown results in breakthrough. Our systems are breaking down today—all of them. And we feel it. All our professions, all our religions, all our politics and economic and educational establishments need reinventing. They all lack feminine energy, wisdom energy. They lack cosmology and creativity. This gives hope –that the Divine can and will return in a more balanced form to our species. She will return through a coming alive of our love of life and a

response to the pain so omnipresent on our planet. This response will precipitate an outbreak of creativity. If we can use justice and compassion as contours to contain and to critique the use of creativity, then what we give birth to will serve other generations and other species instead of destroy them. Then the Spirit will be at work once again, creating and recreating with humankind.

(Joan) Let us not deceive ourselves or live in a silly illusion about our creativity. *Creativity is a choice*. (In theological terms , it is grace and works operating together. It is an option to live a life with grace.) Creativity is not a particular gift given to certain people only. It is a personal choice and a cultural choice. An individual choice and a family, professional, and a social choice, and at this time in our history it is a species choice. We chose whether to let creativity flow or not—in our educational systems, our media, our politics, our economics, our religions, our very psyches. In theological terms , it is a matter of letting the Spirit in, the Christ in, the Buddha nature in.

I believe Sri Aurobindo had this in mind when he predicted a 'coming dawn" for the resurrection of poetry itself---provided we tap into a "larger cosmic vision" that would and could release the "Divine possibilities" of our species. Perhaps Hildegard of Bingen, put it best when she said:

God has gifted creation with everything that is necessary…..
Humankind, full of all creative possibilities, is God's work.
Humankind is called to co-create……..
God gave to humankind the talent to create with all the world……..

It is true that we are a species that can say "NO" to our potential. We can choose not to develop our potential, our creativity and that of our children. We can choose to turn our creativity over to others and to institutions that appear more imposing than ourselves. Yes, we can use our creativity for demonic purposes----even to deny our powers of creation is to serve demonic powers that will willingly fill the gap. Yes, we can resist evolution—even our own. And our bad deeds will shame. And our species will end, bringing down much beauty with it. But I do believe that humankind can opt instead for the "Good deeds that glorify." We must. The Spirit of Creativity is expecting us to do so. Creation is waiting for our response.

These are inspired words shared by Matthew Fox and we respond with a hearty **AMEN! ALLELUIA!)**

Shared Homily

THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(Bob & All) We have faith in one God, one Source of all life,
one Ground of the whole Earth, who created all things good.
And we have faith in Christ, in whom we have been shown the special role of humanity, to bear God's likeness in working and caring for Creation,
in seeking to understand her mysteries and powers, in working with these powers
for the wellbeing of life on Earth.
And we have faith in God's Spirit who leads us to a meek, unselfish and compassionate life- style.
So that the Earth is inherited in peace, her life is transformed for all creatures and her bounty shared justly.
So be it. Amen

(Adapted From India. Source: Sinfonia Oecumenica, Gütersloher Verlag- shaus, Gütersloh 1998. Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2003)

Intercessory Prayers: "To hope and act with Creation"

(Pat) ~God of the land, the sea, the sky:
Creator of all that is seen and unseen.
Open our hearts to the rhythm of Creation in the swells of the ocean,
the movements of air and wind, the breath of all living things.
Open our eyes to the fragile beauty of the biodiversity of which we are a part.
Open our ears to the sounds of life around us.
Open our minds to the awareness of our deep relationship with all your Creation**.**
Creator God, **(All) May we hope and act with Creation.**

~God of Light, Life and Love:
Help us to seek and find your presence in all Creation.
Help us to understand the roots of the ecological crisis and give us the wisdom to live resiliently in harmony with your Creation.
Keep us firm in the faith that the gift of life in all its fullness is for all Creation.
Help us to maintain hope that your reign of love is manifested in our common love for you, for ourselves, and for our neighbor - both human and non-human.
Creator God**,** **(All) May we hope and act with Creation.**

~God of truth and justice:
Fill us with your spirit of compassion so we may live and act with and in solidarity with Creation.
Guide us in paths of righteousness that help us to tread softly on the land and

sail gently on the sea.
Give us wisdom and courage to recognize our role in the evil of systemic exploitation and extraction and to speak truth to power.
Give us strength of heart and arm to be agents of the ecological conversion the world so desperately needs. Creator God,
All: **May we hope and act with Creation.**
(Rev. James Bagwan, Pacific Conference of Churches) THE FIRSTFRUITS OF HOPE 3
(Pat) Whom or what else shall we lift up in prayer?
All: May we hope and act with Creation.
(Joan M) Prayer book requests…..
All: May we hope and act with Creation.

OFFERTORY SONG AND PRAYER *(Have bread and wine/juice on your table)*
(Cathy) Let us rejoice as we sing:
Holy, Holy, Holy: Here in this Place by Christopher Grundy https://youtu.be/uXyu57tR2gk?si=xAc1gOkkEdxoz3sv

Offering: (Cathy) O Holy One, we bring you our gifts from creation, bread of the grain and wine of the grapes. We recognize that they are holy in you, their Creator. And we know that they will make us holy, one with you and one with each other.

Eucharistic Prayer
(Joan & All) We commit ourselves to live the ministry of the Gospel as we speak clearly with respect and love, as we challenge the contradictions within our society, especially during these times of division and fear. We remind ourselves daily to remain faithful in our words and actions to our commitment to nonviolence. We are called to the inner life, our spiritual life, to be open to the new beginnings in our lives. We walk with Jesus seeking wisdom and peace.

(Hold your hand over bread and wine)
(Cathy & All) Jesus, we remember the last meal you had with your followers. We call upon Sacred Spirit, ever and always with us, to bring blessing on this bread and wine as they are made sacred through our faith in the presence of Christ with us.
During Jesus's life on earth, he lived and died loving the poor, healing the sick and challenging the injustices within society. Because of his ministry, Jesus was

feared by the authorities of his day, and they sought out ways to bring him to his death.

(Maryal & All) On the night before he faced his own death, Jesus sat at the Seder supper with his companions and friends. He reminded them of all that he taught them, and to fix that memory clearly with them, he bent down and washed their feet.

All lift 🥖 and pray:

(Elena & All) When he returned to his place at the table, he lifted the bread, spoke the blessing, broke the bread and offered it to them saying:
Take and eat, this is my very self.

Pause, then lift the 🍷 and pray:

(Maryal & All) Jesus took the cup, spoke the grace, and offered it to them saying: Take and drink. This is the new covenant. Whenever you remember me like this, I am among you. *(pause)*

(Cathy & All) What we have heard with our ears,
we will live with our lives.
As we share communion,
we will become communion
both love's nourishment and love's challenge.

(Elena) Let us share this bread and cup to proclaim and live the gospel of justice and peace. We listen to the groaning of creation, remembering that we are bearers of light and hope. We are Christ alive today.
Throughout the weeks of Creation we have been encouraged to Listen to the joy, beauty, dance, cries and needs of this earth. In preparation to receive communion and so become communion let us quiet our souls during this next song, and then, rid of distractions, listen and connect with Creation's call.

Communion Song: Are you Listening?" *(Stop at 4:51)*
https://youtu.be/28sqs5H5hao?si=l5BW0eEhNR0dvcjt
Brian Doerksen Sung by Eric Soh "Creation Calls-

We now share the bread and wine, saying,
" May Justice and Peace be shared through your Presence within us"

Communion Meditation: *The Water of Life* by Kerani
https://youtu.be/FvcedDyMqUU?si=sAWp4peAYsGWikfe
(Stop at 2:05)

LORD'S PRAYER
(Joan and All) Oh cosmic birther of all radiance and vibration, soften the ground of our bodies and carve out a space within us where your presence can abide. Fill us with your creativity so that we may be empowered to bear the fruit of your mission. Let each of our actions bear fruit in accordance with our desires. Endow us with the wisdom to produce and share what each being needs to grow and flourish. Untie the tangled threads of destiny that bind us as we release others from the entanglement of past mistakes. Do not let us be seduced by that which would divert us from our true purpose that illuminate the opportunities of our present moment for you are the ground, the truthful mission, the birth, the power and fulfillment as all is gathered and made whole again. And so it is. AMEN
From the original Translation found in the Aramaic bible/Tina Nyambwe

A Prayer for Our Earth. (Cathy)
All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
And in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and
forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the
world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,

recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace. **All: Amen**

(Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*)

Thanksgiving. Introductions. Announcements.

Final Blessing. (Elena)

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marveled at the lilies of the field,
Who transforms chaos to order,
Lead us to protect creation,
To listen to the voice of all creatures that reflect God's glory.

(adapted from the CTBI Eco-Congregation Programme)

Planting Seeds - A Song of Life
https://youtu.be/5AmqYcWjBmc?si=U2GJDLFPn41nQt4B

If you want to add an intercession to our MMOJ Community Prayer book, please send an email to Joan: jmeehan515@aol.com

If you want to invite someone to attend our liturgy, please refer them to the day's liturgy at MaryMotherofJesus.net

To support our community, please send your donations to:

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
5342 Clark Road, Sarasota, FL 34233

The Lord's Prayer

Lord's Prayer in the language of your choice.

Sharing of peace

In Christ, we are called not to conform to this world, but to be trans- formed by the renewing of our minds.

We seek to discern the will of God, to do what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Let us not lag in zeal but be ardent in spirit and serve God.

We intend to live in harmony with one another and with all of Creation.

Let us strive to live peaceably with all and share a sign of peace with one another.
The peace of God be with you.

And also with you. Amen.

Benediction

May God who can set Creation free, show us his glory.

Glory to God.
May God who knows our groaning and crying, bring about new life.

Now and always.
May God who helps us in our weakness, give us the firstfruits of hope.

The Lord is our hope.
And may the Triune God sprinkle into our hearts the dew of his grace and bless us all.

Amen.