The Immaculate Conception

Presiders:
Joan Pesce
Dotty Shugrue
Prayer Readers and Leaders:
Mary Montavon
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WELCOME AND GATHERING:

Joan: Welcome to our Zoom liturgy at Mary Mother of Jesus, an Inclusive Catholic Community, where all are welcome. At these difficult times, it is now more important than ever to gather together to support one another as we are "companions on this journey," a journey of the unknown; for "wherever two or more of you are gathered in my Name, there is love."

As we share this Liturgy let us be calm, be still in the truth knowing that the Cosmic Christ is consistently and always present in our broken world, in all creation and in the entire Universe.

GATHERING PRAYER

Dotty; Today we celebrate the Immaculate Conception of Mary the mother of Jesus. We find peace and comfort in Mary's response of acceptance and the strength of her faith.

Let us begin now with our gathering song:

Blessed Unrest sung by Zo Tobi

https://youtu.be/pLAZ9q6JDj0

TRANSFORMATION PRAYER:

Mary Montavon: The suffering being experienced by the people of the world is greater than ever before in our lifetimes. We commit ourselves to do whatever we can, in any way we can, to alleviate suffering and to comfort the sick and their families.

ALL: Transform us Christ with deepening faith

It is difficult today to keep our focus on the Divine Presence within in us and within everyone around us. Peaceful protests are

interrupted needlessly. Racism and white supremacy infiltrate all our structures. We commit ourselves to speak truth to power.

ALL. Transform us Christ with deepening faith

The divisions among our leaders of government work against the needs of our people. We commit ourselves to support the needs of others in whatever ways we can and to share our faith that goodness will prevail.

All: Transform us Christ with deepening faith

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Jack McKillip: Reading

Reflection by Lisle Gwynn Garrity – Luke 1:26-35

Did it feel like a dream when the angel approached? "Greetings, favored one!"
Did her mind spin as she pondered the impossibility of it all? "You will bear a son… and he will be great."
Did she lose her balance when she realized the gravity of her call? "The child will be holy… The son of the Holy One"
Did her legs get weak after the words left her lips? "Here I am…Let it be."
In the quiet that followed, did she answer everything? Did she realize what this would mean – for her family…for Joseph…for her future? Did she realize that she would be perceived as being impure, as a threat to patriarchy, and power? Did fear cloak her like a garment pulled too tight?
And so, in a haze, she runs away – seeking refuge in the hill country, retreating to family who would keep her safe and help her make sense of her world turned upside down.
As soon as she falls into Elizabeth's arms, they know the truth together. This is not a dream deferred; it is a dream confirmed, a dream shared. A dream that will birth joy.

These are the inspired words of Lisle Gwynn Garrity and the community responds:

ALL: Let it Be So and So It Is

Jane Shugrue. Reflection on Mary,Mother of Jesus by Joan Pesce

Today, our focus is on Mary as she prepares for the birth of Jesus. We consider Mary as a true Child of Humanity, just like us, with the human and the divine as one within her. So it is not difficult to imagine Mary having the thoughts, questions and anxieties presented as a result of all that she has been asked to do. Isn't that what we do when we experience an unexpected event or are faced with a challenging decision or worry about a situation facing a loved one?

My guess is that these thoughts and feelings did not enter Mary's consciousness just once but that they filled her mind and heart as she traveled the long journey over the hills to Elizabeth's house.

I also think that, like us on our daily journeys, she turned these thoughts, questions and anxieties over in her mind and heart until they finally exhausted her. And then within the deepest part of her, she let go, surrendered, gave up any resistance and opened her mind and heart fully to the Divine Spirit within her, who filled her with profound peace and deep joy. Now she was truly ready to birth Jesus.

This is what we, too, are called to do as we struggle with challenges on our daily journey. We, too, must go within and finally let go of our expectations, anxieties and limited desires and allow the Divine Spirit to fill us with deep peace and guidance. It is only then that we, like Mary, can birth the Christ to the World.

These are the inspired of words Joan Pesce and the community responds:

ALL: Let it be So and So it Is

Come Darkness, Come Light Mary Chapin Carpenter (in place of Alleluia)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fb4id4rDwd0

Joan:

Our Gospel today is taken from the apostle called Luke 1:26-38.

Six months later the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a young woman named Mary.

She was engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. Upon arriving, the angel said to Mary, "Rejoice, highly favored one! God is with you. Blessed are you among women!" Mary was deeply troubled by these words and wondered what the angel's greeting meant.

The angel went on to say to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God. You will conceive and bear a son, and give him the name Jesus—'Deliverance.' His dignity will be great, and he will be called the 'Only Begotten of God.' God will give Jesus the judgment seat of David, his ancestor, to rule over the house of Jacob forever, and his reign will never end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have never been with a man?" The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you—hence the offspring to be born will be called the Holy One of God. Know too that Elizabeth, your kinswoman, has conceived a child in her old age; she who was thought to be infertile is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible with God."

Mary said, "I am the servant of God. Let it be done to me as you say." With that, the angel left her.

These are the inspired words of the apostle called Luke, and the community responds:

ALL: Let it be so and so it is!

Dotty: **Homily Starter:**

Blessed Unrest Paul Hawkman

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xkz2OjMOg88

Please share your thoughts, comments and insights.

Statement of Faith

Mary Montavon:

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 depth of God living in each of us, the breath of God moving in our being.

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.

Prayers of the Community

Jack Mc Phillip: **As we prepare for this sacred meal, we are aware that just as Mary awaits the birth of her child, we too are waiting for the healing power of the Christ in us and in our world. We voice our intentions today as we pray….**

We bring to the table "we the people" who have grave concerns about our country. We pray that leaders will live out their commitment and faithfulness to our Constitution.

We bring to the table our newly elected national leaders soon to take their place in the seats of power. We pray that their eyes be open and their determination for change be completely focused on "we the people"

We bring to the table "we the people" that our faith in one another will not falter in our belief "in God we Trust."

We bring to the table the immigrants fleeing persecution and seeking asylum in safe countries around the world. We pray that they will be treated with respect and dignity as they seek freedom.

We bring to the table our hope that government leaders will seek fair and just ways to protect our borders as well as support those who seek our help.

And for what else shall we pray –(Joan Meehan)

We bring to the table all of the cares and concerns we hold within our hearts.

Jane Shugrue: **We are blessed by the Holy One in a multitude of ways. We have bread made from human hands, and wine made from harvested grapes. These are gifts of the earth, and together they will become our spiritual food and drink.**

With this bread and wine, we pledge ourselves to the teachings of Jesus as revealed in the Gospels. We accept our call to be present to all persons in our world. We are committed to the teachings and the ministry of Jesus.

With open hands let us pray:

Holy One, In recognizing the wisdom and grace of Mary's presence in our lives we choose to emulate her faithfulness as she continue Jesus's ministry after his death. She taught us the values that reflect our promise to serve. too, join, we lift up our hearts and sing:

Here in This Place by Christopher Grundy

https://youtu.be/sgkWXOSGmOQ

Joan: We celebrate, O Holy One, Mary's acceptance to bring Jesus into the world.

Jesus as teacher spoke in such ways that hundreds listened to him. Jesus took time to go apart from the chaos in his life and to pray alone. Like John he knew that caring for his spiritual life nurtured his soul, and he grew in wisdom and understanding. He gained strength to face the challenges of his mission.

We, too, are called to speak clearly with respect and love, as we challenge the numerous injustices our world faces today. We are called to the inner life, our spiritual life, to go apart and pray. We walk with Mary as she walked with Jesus seeking wisdom and peace.

Dotty: 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.

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 plates and pray the following:

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)

All lift the cup and pray the following:

Then he took the cup of the covenant, spoke the grace, and offered it to them saying:
Take and drink.
Whenever you remember me like this,
I am among you.
(pause)

Let us share this bread and cup to proclaim and live the gospel of justice and peace, remembering that we are bearers of light and hope.

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.

Everyone consumes the bread and wine with the words "You are the face of God."

Communion Meditation: Blessed Is She by Colleen Fulmer

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

Mary: Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

O Holy One, who is 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 our 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
(Miriam Therese Winter)

Dotty: Prayers of Thanksgiving and Announcements

Dotty: Blessing

May we seek truth boldly and love deeply.
May we welcome opportunities to birth the Christ in all those we meet.
May we live visitation, as Mary did, and reach out and travel the distance to assist those in need of our support.
May we continue to be the face of the Holy One, and
May our names be a blessing in our time.

Joan: Before we leave our celebration today let us pause and reflect on the gift of each person with us and extend a silent virtual greeting of peace as we listen to this beautiful Song.

Closing Song: Pax Amor Christi – Kathleen Deignan, CND, PhD (Professor of Theology and Spirituality at Iona College)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i944rcYxqqo

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 our website: www.marymotherofJesus.net
where the day's liturgy is found. Zoom instructions are also included there.

NEW PO BOX:
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