Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community

Third Sunday of Advent
December 14, 2024

Presiders: Beth Ponce and Kathryn Shea
Readers: Andrea Seabaugh and Jane Shugrue

IT: Cheryl Brandi and Michael Rigdon

Theme: Rejoice!

Welcome and Gathering

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

The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is the Latin word for *rejoice.* Today we light our third candle, the pink one, as we reflect on the gift of joy eternally promised to us with the birth of Jesus.

Whoever you are,
Wherever you are,
Just as you are,
You are welcome at this table. (*Integral Christianity by Paul Smith*)

Let us begin our liturgy by expressing love through song.

Gathering Song: Rejoice by Charity Gayle (fade out at 2:40 minutes)
https://music.youtube.com/search?q=Rejoice

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH--Prayer

Elena: Holy One, as we light our Advent candle today, help us focus on you during this busy season. May we stay aware of the joy you bring into our lives. We want to find you in the everyday moments and come with hearts of gratitude to your manger on Christmas day.
All: Amen (Elena lights third Advent candle)

Opening Prayer

Kathryn: In the name of our Creator, Jesus our brother, and Holy Spirit Wisdom, we gather with hearts full of joy to celebrate our oneness with and in you and in all things. Let our ears hear, our eyes see, and our hearts receive as we remember and expand the gift of joy on Earth. May Holy Mystery transform the days leading up to Christmas into a time of holy anticipation; preparing our hearts, as we joyfully await the chance to celebrate the birth of Jesus. 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 and so it is!

Liturgy of the Word

Andrea: First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Shout for joy, O daughter Zion!
Sing joyfully, O Israel!
Be glad and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The LORD has removed the judgment against you
and turned away your enemies;
the Holy One is in your midst,
you have no further misfortune to fear.
On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Fear not, O Zion, be not discouraged!
Our God is in your midst,
a mighty lover;

and will rejoice over you with gladness,
and renew you in love,
Our God will sing joyfully because of you,
as one sings at festivals.

<u>Jane:</u> Second Reading: Phillppians 4:4-7
Brothers and sisters:
Rejoice in our God always.
I shall say it again: rejoice!
Your kindness should be known to all.
The Holy One is near.
Have no anxiety at all, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
make your requests known to God.
Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding
will guard your hearts and minds in Jesus the Christ.

<u>Beth:</u> Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

The crowds asked John the Baptist,
"What should we do?"
He said to them in reply,
"Whoever has two cloaks
should share with the person who has none.
And whoever has food should do likewise."
Even tax collectors came to be baptized and they said to him,
"Teacher, what should we do?"
He answered them,
"Stop collecting more than what is prescribed."
Soldiers also asked him,
"And what is it that we should do?"
He told them,
"Do not practice extortion,
do not falsely accuse anyone,
and be satisfied with your wages."

Now the people were filled with expectation,
and all were asking in their hearts
whether John might be the Christ.
John answered them all, saying,
"I am baptizing you with water,
but one mightier than I is coming.
I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals.
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

**His winnowing fan is in his hand to clear his threshing floor
and to gather the wheat into his barn,
but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."
Exhorting them in many other ways,
he preached good news to the people.**

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

Homily Starter and Community Sharing

Communal Statement of Faith

Andrea 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.**

Andrea: 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

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

Our response is: Our joy is everlasting.

We pray for all those suffering as a result of the natural disasters taking place on our planet.
Response: Our joy is everlasting.

We pray for all who are suffering, lonely, and without faith or hope.
Response: Our joy is everlasting.

We pray for all those living in the conditions of war and fear.
Response: Our joy is everlasting.

We pray for the intentions in our MMOJ community prayer list. (Joan shares)
Response: Our joy is everlasting.

And, for what else should we pray?

Response: All: Our joy is everlasting.

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

Eucharistic Prayer

Kathryn: 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.

Beth: 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.

Andrea: 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.

Kathryn: 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]

Beth: 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.

Beth: 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..)*

Beth 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.

COMMUNION RITE

The Prayer of Jesus

Andrea: Let us pray as Jesus taught us.
Andrea 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:

Kathryn: ***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."

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

Beth 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.

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

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

Communion Song: Mary, Did You Know
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPsgIhlYQmM

Introductions/Thanksgiving/Announcements

Closing Community Blessing

Kathryn: Please raise your hands in blessing: And together with our arms extended to one another we say:

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.

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

Closing Song: We Are Bethlehem by Alana Levandoski
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLpdfXSIdFo

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:

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
5342 Clark Road #3079
Sarasota, FL 34233