

**Community of St. Bridget**  
*an inclusive catholic experience*  
**The Kinship of Jesus – November 24, 2024**

Liturgist: Nancy Tondy  
Homilist: Cathy O’Keefe



One Sacred Community, Mary Southard

**Suggestion:** Please have a copy of today’s Worship Aid and a piece of bread and cup of wine or grape juice so you can participate fully.

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Come in. Come into this place that we make special by our very presence. Where the ordinary is sanctified, the human is celebrated, and the compassionate is expected.

**ALL:** Together we make this a holy place with our every act of celebration.

With the flame of St. Bridget, we proclaim the transformative power of God. We give thanks that God’s transforming love has been, is now, and will ever be at work within us and in all creation. Amen.

Opening Song: ***Rhapsody of Rest*** Inspired by Psalm 92, by Sara Thomsen, *Song Like a Seed* (2018).

<https://youtu.be/r4HRXiNEFw4?si=defNKgrGVlqhxTft> (no video)

The sun is rising in the east  
And the feathered flutes begin trilling in the trees  
And I sing to love / Sing to give love  
Sing to hold love / Sing to be love

In the morning, thank you, thank you

In the evening, thank you, thank you  
In the middle of the day, thank you, thank you  
In the deep dark night, thank you, thank you

The sun is shining in the South  
And I breathe you in, and I breathe you out  
And I breathe in love / Breathe out to give love  
Breathe in to hold love / Breathe out to be love

The sun is setting in the West  
And the birds begin to sing their rhapsody of rest  
And I rest in love / Rest to give love  
Rest to hold love / Rest to be love

Mizmor shir leyom haShabbat (*"A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day"*)

In the morning, hallelujah  
In the evening, hallelujah  
In the middle of the day, hallelujah  
In the deep dark night, hallelujah

And I sing to love / Sing to give love  
Sing to hold love / Sing to be love

Breathe in love / Breathe out to give love  
Breathe in to hold love / Breathe out to be love

Rest in love / Rest to give love  
Rest to hold love / Rest to be love

In the morning, hallelujah  
In the evening, hallelujah  
In the middle of the day, hallelujah  
In the deep dark night, hallelujah

Today, we have reached the end of our Liturgical Year, as we celebrate the Kinship of Jesus. It is a time to recall the insights we have gained, our ongoing transformation as disciples of Jesus, and our response to the action of the Spirit in our lives. Today's scriptures celebrate Wisdom, personified as a Woman. She is God's indwelling presence in and among humanity—among all our relations. Our Gospel declares the servanthood of Jesus and his call to servant-leadership. We open ourselves to this sacred time in the Name of the Divine: Source of All Being, Eternal Word, and Holy Wisdom-Sophia. Amen.

Transformation Rite:

As we come to the Table of Friendship, let us open our hearts to the transformative power of Christ among us:

**ALL:** When we fear the loss of time and the reality of aging,

1. Open us to the brilliant colors of autumn, the mellow beauty of sunsets, and the splendor of the changing land.

**ALL:** When we struggle with the unknown and our lack of control,

2. Make us like the geese, who unfold their wings and raise their beaks to the sky, so willing to leave their nests of comfort for a new destination.

**ALL:** When we grow weary of the demands of using our gifts to benefit others,

3. Take us to the autumn fields where Earth shares the bounty of summer and allows her lands to surrender their abundance.

**ALL:** When we become too absorbed in life's hurried pace,

4. Wrap us in the darkening days of autumn. Give us wisdom to slow down as Earth does when she allows her soil to rest in silent, fallow space.

5. Creator of the Seasons, you call us to live our lives with integrity. We open ourselves to the Creative Source, your Spirit, alive in our world today.

**ALL:** We rejoice and give thanks. Amen.

**Glory to God**, Marty Haugen, *Agape: The Stories and the Feast* (1993) GIA Publications, Inc.  
<https://youtu.be/R5xsdVs8HmM?si=cBMVkX5IGHAUF4uu&t=20> (no video)

**Refrain:** Glory to God, in the highest! (x3)  
And peace to God's People on Earth.

We sing praises to you, God of Light, God of Wonder,  
Hearts filled with joy, let our voices be thunder! And sing... **R**

Sing to Jesus the Christ, Word of Life to the nations,  
Raised up in glory as our hope of salvation. O sing... **R**

In the Spirit we come for the feast and the stories  
Seeking our God in the pain and the glory. O sing... **R**

### Opening Prayer

God of Wonder, awaken in us a yearning for connection with You, with Every Living Soul, and with the Body of Earth our Mother. Let us be lured by the strength of attraction between and among us. Awaken us to the River of Resurrection that is your Holy Kinship, that we may truly see, how we each live and flow in this River. Amen.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD\*

*We now experience the Spirit of Our Living God as we listen to the Scripture readings broken open and shared by all.*

**First Reading:** Sirach 24:12-21

A reading from the Wisdom of Sirach:

I have taken root in a holy people,  
people who belong to God, God's heritage.  
There, I have grown tall  
as a cedar in Lebanon, as a cypress on Mount Hermon.  
I have grown tall as a palm in En-Gedi,  
as the rose bushes of Jericho,  
as a fine olive in the field,  
as a plane tree beside the water.  
Like cinnamon and precious oils, I yield perfume.  
Like choice myrrh, I spread my fragrance.  
Like the smell and smoke of frankincense, I fill the tent.  
I have spread my branches like a terebinth,  
luminous and graceful.  
I bud forth delights like the vine.  
My blossoms become a harvest of abundant fruit.

I am the Mother of Love, inspiring wonder.  
I am Woman Wisdom, imparting understanding.  
I am holy hope. I, Wisdom, am undying and timeless.  
I am given to all my children, to all those named by God.<sup>1</sup>

Come to me, you who yearn for me!  
Eat your fill of my fruits!

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<sup>1</sup> Other ancient texts include verse 18, included here.

The memory of me is sweeter than honey,  
sweeter than the honeycomb.  
All who eat of me will hunger for more.  
All who drink of me will thirst for more.

The inspired words of our ancient spiritual tradition. Amen.

**Responsorial:** Psalm 63:2; 4-6; 8+12

**Cantor:** *In the shadow Your wings, we sing for joy.*

God, You are our God. We seek You. We thirst for You. Our bodies, our whole beings, long for You. For You we yearn, as in a dry and parched land, where there is no water. **R**

Your unflinching love is better than life itself. Our lips will ever praise you, telling of Love's glory. We will bless You all our lives long. We will lift up our hands and call on Your name. You satisfy us as with a rich feast. With joyous lips, our mouths will sing Your praise. **R**

You have always been our healer and our help. In the shadow of your wings, we sing for joy! You raise up servants, those you have called, to guide your people. All will rejoice in you. **R**

**Cantor:** Alleluias

**Second Reading - Gospel:** Mark 10:43

A reading from the Holy Gospel attributed to Mark:

Speaking to his disciples, Jesus taught: "Anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant. Anyone who wants to be first among you must serve all. For the Human One came not to be served but to serve, and to pour out life that others may live."

The inspired words attributed to the evangelist, Mark. Amen.

**Cantor:** Alleluias

**Third Reading:** Revelation 1:5b-8

A reading from the Book of Revelation:

To the one who loves us and has freed us, to the one who has made us to be a kingdom—all of us priests, serving a Loving God—to that servant leader be glory and honor for ever and ever. Amen.

*Look, Christ is coming on the clouds!  
Every eye will see it,*

*even those who pierced Jesus.  
All the peoples of the earth  
will lament Jesus' sufferings.  
So shall it be. Amen.*

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says God, “the One who is and was and is to come, the All in All.”

The inspired words of a Late First-Century Writer, known as John. Amen.

Shared Homily: Cathy O’Keefe

The readings today describe the result of compassionate caring, since that is what kinship, what servanthood, is— love in action, in other words. I see the emphasis in today’s readings as how that looks over a lifetime. The opening song traverses the day and how we can rely on the abiding nature of God from the morning star when we rise until we rest with the setting sun at night.

In our humanness, as our consciousness increases about the actual process of daily living, we admit our fears of the rapid passage of time, of changing social structures, of being over-committed, of aging, and of illness and death. Because we can reflect on the past, live in the present, and anticipate the future, we must look to Wisdom to assure us that this relationship of service, of our creator/parent caring for us, is enduring. That’s why this is such a great theme for the end of a liturgical year as we see how our Servant God nurtures us all, over time, toward our own call to servanthood.

In the Sirach reading, the lens is widened from one day to an entire lifetime. The Divine enters right from the start into the whole community, making it a holy people. The result is a life for all of us rooted in the Divine, serviced and nourished by all that the earth offers, reaching maturity in all its glory. If there is a Divine Plan, that’s it: GOD WITH US! And the responsorial Psalm is our song back to God, thanking and praising the creator’s promise, not of sparing us from life’s suffering and challenges, but of being with and in us through it all. The reading from Revelation says simply that eventually we will ALL see that reality.

Since November 5<sup>th</sup>, it’s been pretty clear that we aren’t seeing that REALITY now. Instead of embracing the servant nature of God in the midst of the changes that time inevitably brings, and confidently trusting God’s servant leadership, fear of those changes has prompted an intense desire for order.

And because a new order, described by Richard Rohr as a “re-ordering,” is difficult to envision, an order where women, people of color, and those with different customs and lifestyles are respected, voters have embraced an old familiar order, claiming that the old order is God’s will for us and will take away the fear.

Church history is an obvious parallel. An inability to envision men and women as equals in ministry is too culturally disconcerting for the institution, so the Church tries to restore the pre-Vatican II ethos under the patriarchal eyes of the clergy. Through it, a monarchical Jesus, as King, will transact protection from the ills of life and maintain order with a God who brokers it.

In the Servant understanding of God, the “broker” becomes the broken who does not spare us from suffering but enters into it with us. God is our accompanier; we are the refugee and God the refuge there with us, holding us, never abandoning, manipulating, or demeaning us.

We will soon embark on a new Liturgical year. *How do you see the servanthood of God, the kinship of Jesus, being incarnated into our post-election world?*

*Holding these thoughts in the sacred space among us and strengthened by the support of one another, we now proclaim our affirmation of faith:*

#### Affirmation of Faith\*\*

- 6.** We have faith in one God,  
one Source of all life,  
one Ground of the whole Earth,  
who created all things good.
  
- 7.** 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.
  
- 1.** And we have faith in God’s Spirit  
who leads us to a meek, unselfish and compassionate lifestyle.  
So that the Earth is inherited in peace,  
her life is transformed for all creatures, and her bounty shared justly.  
So be it. Amen.

#### Prayer of the Faithful

Knowing our God is faithful, generous, and abiding, let us bring to this Table our cares and concerns—for ourselves, our loved ones, and our world. Our response is: ***We awaken to your call.***

*For whom and for what shall we pray?*

Eternal Source of Life, help us discover how we can be most useful, for we long to see a world where there is joy, where it is safe to live, and where everyone belongs. Empower us to co-create this world as you intend it to be. Amen.

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

#### Sign of Peace

As we prepare this sacred meal, we reaffirm that, just as Jesus was anointed, so is each of us. And so, we celebrate our Creator's fruitful love as we extend our blessing to one another with joy. May the peace that our brother Jesus offers be always with us!

#### Offertory (All raise bread and cup)

We place on our plate the harvest to be won by labor's love. And into the cup we pour all the sap which is to be pressed out this day from the Earth's fruits.

#### Prayer Over the Gifts

**ALL:** O Gracious One, giver of the gifts we bring, receive them from your church gathered here today, affirming the sacrament of your Presence among us. Amen.

The Holy One is with us, abounding in Love!

2. Giving thanks to the Source of All Life, we open our hearts in the name of Jesus, who lives and loves, heals and empowers, through us.
3. We praise you, O God of wonder and life, as we celebrate Jesus' life and ministry, a witness to the life of compassion and love we are all called to live. We lift up our hearts with all the saints and angels:

***Here In This Place***, Christopher Grundy on *Come to the Feast* © 2002 Hand and Soil Music. Released 2002-01-01 (adapted by The Upper Room Community).

[https://youtu.be/sgkWXOSGmOQ?si=p\\_EWsVpinJGkro10](https://youtu.be/sgkWXOSGmOQ?si=p_EWsVpinJGkro10) (lyric/video)

Holy One, may your presence here open our minds  
may your Spirit among us help us to find  
you are rising up now like a fountain of grace  
from the holy ground here in this place. Here in this place.



Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty  
the whole universe speaks of your glory  
from the holy ground here in this place. Here in this place.

4. Creator God, we see around us the work of your hands, the fruit of your wisdom and love. The unfolding story of creation witnesses unceasingly to your creative power. We, your creatures, often deviate from that wisdom, hindering your creative presence in our midst.
5. Sending among us Jesus, our Light and Hope, you birth afresh in our world the power of Sophia Wisdom, and in the gift of the Spirit, your creative goodness blooms anew, amid the variety and wonder of life.

**ALL:** Spirit of Life, all that exists is blessed and enlivened by your presence. May these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine, and our very lives, be the nourishment we need to sustain us.

6. As a Christian people we celebrate the Open Table, proclaimed by Jesus our liberator and our friend, a Table of abundant life, inclusive love, and liberation, where all are welcome, and from which no one is to be excluded.

At this gathering, we take bread, as Jesus took bread, and we remember, as Jesus remembered, the constant presence of the Spirit of Life and Love. And Jesus offers it to us now, saying: **(All raise bread)**

**ALL:** *Take and eat, all of you. This is my Self, the Bread of Life which I give to strengthen you.*

Jesus then raised a cup of blessing, spoke the grace, and offers it to us now, saying: **(All raise cup)**

**ALL:** *Take and drink this Cup of Life, the Covenant made new again through my life in you. Whenever you remember me like this, I am among you.*

We give thanks for who we are in Christ:

**ALL:** Matter becomes conscious, the universe coming to reflect on itself, earthen vessels that hold a treasure, temple of God's Spirit, the Body of Christ.

**(All raise bread and cup)**

**ALL:** For it is through learning to live as Jesus lived,  
And why he lived,  
And for whom he lived,

That we awaken to your Spirit within,  
Moving us to worship you truly,  
Life-giving God,  
At this time, and all time, and in all ways.

**Cantor:** Amen!

### Communion Rite

We pray as these gifts are shared among us:

**7.** Loving God, you call us to live the Gospel of peace and justice.

*We will live justly.*

**1.** Loving God, you call us to be your presence in the world.

*We will love tenderly.*

**2.** Loving God, you call us to speak truth to power.

*We will walk with integrity in your presence.*

### **(Presider raises bread and cup)**

This is the Bread and Cup of Life, through which we are nourished, and we nourish one another.

**ALL:** We receive this bread and fruit of the vine as the presence of Christ among us!

*All are welcome to receive at our Tables of Friendship!*

Communion Meditation: **Infinite Grace**, Sara Hart, *The Give and Keep* (2010). (

[https://youtu.be/EeLj8Y5Wr8E?si=BuMq2\\_ySJd-xicxq](https://youtu.be/EeLj8Y5Wr8E?si=BuMq2_ySJd-xicxq) (no video)

There is a welcome field where even the water's still  
A pasture made for rest in the arms of holiness  
Where mercy gently sings, and thirsty hearts can drink  
Let us find our way – Lead us to that place

**Refrain:**     Where infinite grace falls like rain  
                  Where infinite grace sings our name  
                  Where merciful love shepherds us in beautiful ways  
                  With infinite grace

And let us want no more than to be with you more  
To simply catch our breath when we see the table set  
With cups that overflow, our future and our hope

When fear is lost to love, and you are more than enough **R**

How sweet the sound that saves us, the Word by which we're found  
The promise that sustains us, the light that leads us home  
Lead us home **R**

With infinite grace. With infinite grace. With infinite grace.

*Together we pray to God as Jesus did:* (by Miriam Therese Winter, adapted)

**3.** 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.

**4.** Each day you give us all that we need;

You remind us of our limits, and we let go.  
You support us in our power, and we act with courage.

**5.** For you are the dwelling place within us,

The empowerment around us,  
And the celebration among us, now and forever. Amen.

**A Thanksgiving Prayer** (November 24, 2021, posted by Ilia Delio)

O God, You who are source and center of all life,  
We thank you for Yourself, for without You we would not be.  
We thank you for the elements which sustain our lives,  
for air, water, earth and sun.  
Awaken us to their precious livingness.

We thank you for the beauty of the earth,  
for rocks and soil, plants and trees.  
Awaken us to the aliveness of all earthly life.

We thank you for the rich variety of human persons,  
for black, brown, red, yellow, for gay, trans, poly, straight,  
for all the many ways we humans seek to express ourselves.  
Awaken us to your ineffable love which delights in diversity.  
Deepen Your love within us, that love which fills every human heart  
in a unique way.

We thank You for the darkness of our age, for without darkness,

we would not seek light.  
We thank You for the struggles of our age, for without struggle,  
we would not seek to move beyond our partial selves.  
We thank You for our differences, for without the tensions between us  
we would not strive for unity.

In all things God, You are,  
and in us, You are coming to be.  
Help us to trust in Your presence,  
to have faith in this world and in one another,  
for we are becoming something more together,  
in You and with You,  
which no words can express,  
for You are simply breathless beauty and peace. Amen.

### Announcements

Blessing – *Let us extend our hands to bless one another.*

May our hearts be freed, and may we continually awaken to the wonder of our lives, as we go forth in peace, held together by the Source of All That Is, clothed in the nature of Jesus our Companion, and reinforced by the strength of Spirit Sophia. Amen.

Closing Song: ***Where Did Jesus Go*** by Sara Thomsen; Album: Song Like a Seed © 2019

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biPM\\_MTQVgI&t=247s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biPM_MTQVgI&t=247s) (lyric video)

Tell me where, where did Jesus go?  
That brown skinned man walkin' the road to Jericho  
Tell me where, where did Jesus go?  
He's up and been deported to Mexico, allelu

**Refrain:** Allelu! What you gonna do?  
Allelu! I'm gonna stand by you  
Love is all you got, love is all you do  
It's bigger than me, and it's bigger than you, allelu

Tell me where, where is Jesus now?  
That Middle Eastern man who could feed a hungry crowd  
Tell me where, where is Jesus now?  
He's on a list of terrorists and they tossed him out of town, allelu **R**

Tell me where, oh if you know, do tell  
That wise guy wasting time with the woman at the well  
Tell me where, oh if you know, do tell  
They say he's queer and outta here and going straight to hell, allelu  
I'll be there too. (I'll be there with you.) **R**

Tell me where oh where, I search and I search  
For that storytellin' man, I can't find him in the church  
He walked out the door, took off his sandals  
And shook off all the dirt, allelu **R**

***Thank you for your courage to worship in a spirit of  
equality and justice!***

***You are welcome to join us again—and to invite a friend—to support  
this Community with your presence and prayer.***

Image by Mary Southard, Ministry of the Arts; used with permission.

Transformation Rite inspired by the writings of Pixie Lighthouse.

Prayers inspired by the writings of John Philip Newell.

\*Today's readings are from the *Comprehensive Catholic Lectionary*, published by the Women's Ordination Conference.

\*\*Affirmation of Faith (Adapted from India. Source: Sinfonia Oecumenica, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh 1998. Reproduced by ECEN for Creation Time 2003).