



**Community of St. Bridget**  
*an inclusive catholic experience*

**Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time – August 23-24, 2025**

Liturgist/Homilist: Rose Gordyan

Presider: Susan Russell



<https://www.youtube.com/hashtag/christiananimation>

**Suggestion:** Please have a copy of the liturgy on hand, a piece of bread, and cup of wine/grape juice so that you can participate fully in this liturgy.

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Come in. Come into this place which we make special by our very presence. Where the ordinary is sanctified, the human is celebrated, the compassionate is expected. Together, we make it a holy place with our every act of celebration.

From the St. Bridget flame from Ireland to our Community gathered here, we light the fire of God's desire as prophets of a new vision of hospitality to welcome all to the Banquet Table of Infinite Love, as we dance the dance of Spirit embracing all.

**ALL:** Let us lift one another with our voices, and with our prayers.

Opening Song: **Sister**, provided to YouTube by CDBaby Sister · Cris Williamson, Album: The Changer and the Changed © 1975 Wolf Moon Records Released on: 1975-01-01

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mm0morOzfQ> (no video; end at 3.20)

Born of the earth  
Child of God  
Just one among the family

And you can count on me to share the load  
and I will always help you hold your burdens,  
and I will be the one to help you ease your pain.

**Refrain:** Lean on me, I am your sister,  
Believe on me, I am your friend (x3)

I will hold you in my arms  
like a white-winged dove  
shine in your soul,  
your spirit is crying... spirit is crying.  
(repeat from beginning through refrain)

Today is the Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time. We affirm that this universe is our meeting place with God. We belong here, just as the woman bent over in the Gospel story. We belong as inspired bodies with the power to love and empower all as we follow the actions and words of the Holy One. Together we celebrate accepting who we are and who we are called to be, one in the Divine Presence. We begin in the name of the Holy One: Source of All Being, Eternal Word, and +Holy Spirit. Amen.

Transformation Rite:

1. Jesus, you came in human form, the outpouring of God's love for human bodies. We feel the pain of sisters and brothers whose bodies lack the basic necessities of survival.
2. We know life will not exist without the plants, animals, and ecosystems that support us all. Yet, we alone have the power to share creation in ways that are just and fair to all species.
3. Life-giving God, you call us to care for everything, knowing how ecological deterioration dehumanizes the poor, the weak, the vulnerable. As more earth becomes desert, water scarcer, air more polluted, food less plentiful, the lines between rich and poor are more sharply drawn.
4. Strengthen our resolve to realize our proper relationships. Deepen our knowledge and obedience to the ways of living appropriately on Earth, our home. Let us adjust our desires and needs to a lifestyle that is sustainable for all.

GLORIA

1. Glory to the Spirit of Life, to the Holy One who surrounds us, who lives within us, whose Sacred Word is shared by us in our world.
2. Glory to the Spirit of Life, who offers us peace; peace in our hearts, peace in our thoughts, peace with one another as we reach out to one another and ask for blessing.
3. Glory to the Spirit of Life, who sent Jesus who, by his word and ministry, teaches us how to live the Gospels, who brings hope and healing to all those in need.

### Opening Prayer

Loving God may we be open to trust you and change our bent-over ways. May we go forward with dignity, love and grace for ourselves and others. May this sacred time together enable us to see that the here and now is sacred, and to accept our path with you, the Divine One. Amen.

### LITURGY OF THE WORD\*

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

#### **First Reading:** Deuteronomy 5:12-15

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy:

Observe the Sabbath day. Keep it holy, as God has commanded you. Six days you will labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath, a day of rest, to your God. You will do no work that day: neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male or female worker, nor your ox, nor your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner or undocumented person residing among you. Your servants, male, female, regardless of gender, will rest, as you do. Remember, you were slaves in Egypt and God brought you out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. This is why God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

The inspired words of an Ancient Israelite Lawmaker. Amen. **(pause to reflect)**

#### **Responsorial:** Psalm: 92:2-5; 13-14; 15-16

**Cantor:** *We proclaim your love at daybreak, your faithfulness at night.*

What a beautiful thing to declare Your love in the morning, and Your faithfulness every night to the music of a ten-stringed harp, to the sounding chords of the lyre! You, O God, have brought us joy. We sing in gladness at what Your hands have done. **R**

All who live justly shall flourish like the palm tree, grow like a cedar of Lebanon. Planted in the house of the Holy One, we will flourish in the courtyard of God. **R**

We will still bear fruit in old age. We will stay green and full of sap. We will sing of God's unfailing nourishment. "God is upright, our sure foundation, in God, there is no wrong." **R**

#### **Cantor:** 8 Alleluias

#### **Second Reading – Gospel:** Luke 13:10-17, 14:1-6

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke:

One Sabbath, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues. Also there was a woman who, for eighteen years, had an ailment caused by a spirit. She was bent over double, incapable of standing up straight.

When Jesus saw her, he called her over to him and said, “Woman, you are set free of your infirmity.” He laid his hands on her, and immediately she stood up straight and began praising God.

The leader of the synagogue, indignant that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the congregation, “There are six days for working. Come on those days to be healed, not on the Sabbath.”

Jesus in reply said, “You hypocrites! Does not each one of you untie your ox or your donkey from the manger on the Sabbath to water it? Shouldn't this daughter of Sarah and Abraham, whom the Evil One has kept bound for eighteen long years, be loosed from her bond on the Sabbath day?” At these words, Jesus’ accusers were humiliated. The people, by contrast, were delighted with all the wonderful things Jesus was doing.

On yet another Sabbath, Jesus went to dine at the home of a leading Pharisee. Those gathered there were observing him carefully. Also, there was a man suffering from dropsy. Jesus spoke to the scholars of the law and to the Pharisees, asking, “Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath or not?” They kept silent and did not respond. After Jesus healed the man, he sent him away. Then Jesus said to the Pharisees, “Who among you, if your child or ox falls into a cistern, would not immediately pull them out on the Sabbath day?” Again, they were silent. They were unable to answer his question.

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

**Cantor:** 8 Alleluias (pause to reflect)

**Third Reading:** Hebrews 12:14, 18-19, 22-24a

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews:

Pursue peace with everyone. Pursue holiness without which no one can see God.

It is not to the tangible, blazing fire of Mount Sinai that you have come. You have not come to Mount Sinai’s gloomy darkness and ominous cloud. You have not come to its storm. You have not come to its trumpet-sound, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them.

No. You have come to the “mountain” of God, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Dwelling, to countless angels in festal gathering. You have come to the assembly of the first-born enrolled in the cosmic splendor! You have come

to God, the gracious judge of all, and to the souls of the just who have been birthed into wholeness. You have come to Jesus, the embodiment of a new covenant.

The inspired writings attributed to the apostle, Paul. Amen.

Homily/Reflection: Rose Gordyan

Every morning I wake up and say to myself—sometimes out loud—“Good Morning, it’s a new day! Thank you, God. Let’s have some joy today.” So, I take a deep breath stand up straight, stretch and begin my new day.

Our readings today help us realize what God wants and gives to us to be fully human and fully alive as a Child of God in the Kingdom of God.

The First Reading contains the commandment to observe the Sabbath, which provides the “law” to make the day holy and be with your God, to rest, and remember you are no longer slaves to another nation. It provides the gift of being fully active and participating in worship. The Psalm goes a little further and uncovers that the ‘Law” was meant for celebration. It was meant to celebrate equality, joy, and life, not limit it.

Our Hebrew reading uses the image of a “mountain” as a holy, high place of Divine encounter. The mountain is used as a place of life that gives us a fullness and quality of life. It is not a place of fear. It introduces the Gospel reading when Jesus refers to the “law” as defense for his actions. More importantly, what Jesus defends ultimately is the radical inclusion of women as having equal “standing” alongside the men of Israel.

The woman in today’s Gospel, “the bent over woman,” was not able to stand straight up. One can wonder if she was able to see a person’s face which is an important way of connecting to others and bring joy to the human race. Did they even know her name, or call her “the bent over woman,” or maybe “the crippled woman”?

Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Luke tells us a woman was there and for eighteen years she had been crippled by a spirit. She was bent over, completely incapable of standing erect. We don’t know her name. Did the others know her name? Or did they only identify her based on her malady? The phrase “crippled by a spirit” doesn’t necessarily imply some sort of demonic possession. All kinds of spirits can cripple us. We might ask what bends us over—Our job, worries, the loss of a loved one, fears for the future, loneliness, ill health, the aging process?

Jesus sees the woman. He notices her. (Remember in the synagogue the men were in the front and the woman were in the back.) He calls to her. She some

how heard him calling. This meant she had to find a path through all the men to get to Jesus. What a hardship it must have been for her.

Jesus touches her despite the cultural restriction of his day that would frown upon this action. He said, "Woman, you are set free of your infirmity." These words and touch give her freedom and dignity. She slowly stands up straight. And for the first time in many years, she is looking someone in the face. And the face is Jesus. You might know that many of the men were not happy because it was the Sabbath and she was a woman. Jesus in turn calls her the daughter of Abraham. The only time this happens in Scripture.

The narrative about the healing of the woman is significant for various reasons: it occurs on the Sabbath; Jesus is in the synagogue teaching; Jesus observes the condition of the woman and calls her forth (from the women's section?) to be healed on the Sabbath. A controversy narrative is attached to the healing narrative. When religious leaders object to Jesus healing on the Sabbath, he reminds them that they do as much or more on the Sabbath for an animal who needs rescue. Finally, the woman's condition of being "bent over", "unable to stand up straight", is symbolic. Jesus "rectifies" this situation by healing her condition, enabling her to stand straight in the world of Judean worship. Jesus' actions can be interpreted as affirmation of her capacity to be a fully active participant in synagogue worship. Although the leaders strongly object, the people are delighted. Is this an argument for women leadership in worship?

"If you always love one another, uphold one another, you will be capable of working wonders!" --St. Mary Euphrasia. The founder of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

*How do you need to be upheld? How can you uphold another today? Imagine what difference this could make.*

Share your thoughts.

*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

4. We believe that where people are gathered together in love, God is present and good things happen and life is full.
5. We believe that we are immersed in Mystery, that our lives are more than they seem, that we belong to each other and to a universe of great creative energies, whose source and destiny is God.

6. We believe that the Spirit of God beat in the heart of Jesus of Nazareth, and God's good news was heard by the broken and wounded.
7. We are glad that the Spirit of peace is present with us, the church, as we gather to celebrate our common existence, and the fidelity of God.
1. And most deeply we believe that in our struggle to love, we incarnate God in the world.
2. And so aware of mystery and wonder, caught in friendship and laughter, we become speechless before the joy in our hearts as we celebrate the sacredness of life in this bread broken and wine poured out to be shared by all. Amen.

#### Prayer of the Faithful

3. Glorious God, Source and Sustenance of Life, Redeeming Presence to the pain and brokenness of our world, Holy Spirit who enlivens and energizes all that exists,
4. We ask your healing power upon us, upon our country and upon all we pray for today. We now bring to this Table our blessings, cares and concerns. After each request, our response remains:  
***We awaken to your call!***

*For whom or for what shall we pray?*

Creator Spirit, we know that you hear the prayers of your people, and all unspoken concerns that we hold in our hearts. In your compassionate love, strengthen our faith so we may believe that with your guidance we can transform our world. 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 (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 God, Giver of the Gifts we bring, receive them from your church gathered here today, affirming the sacrament of your Presence among us.

The Holy One is with us, abounding in Love!

5. We open our hearts in Christ, who lives and loves, heals and empowers through us, and give thanks to the Source of All Life.
6. O Loving God, you bring to birth the world of our dreams for mutual respect and partnership. Give us courage to act justly and work collaboratively to change systems that keep people poor and marginalized in our society.
7. We thank you for the women and men who are working for justice and equality in our church and world. Your gift of the Spirit gives us hope that one day, through our unselfish work in your vineyard, all will be living in peace and harmony within your Kingdom. With thankful hearts in the company of the angels, saints and all souls created in your love, O God of Abundance and Welcome, we praise you in song:

***Holy, Holy, Holy Hosanna*** by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan © 2019 Worldmaking.net  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFR5opb0f2k> (lyric video)

*Holy, holy, holy Hosanna!  
Everything everywhere is full of you!*

1. 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.
2. 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.

Loving God, we honor the presence of +Your Spirit in these our gifts, to celebrate the transformative energy within this bread and fruit of the vine given to nurture afresh in us, the discerning gifts of wisdom, light and truth.



3. We remember all the courageous companions who have gone before us, the holy women and men who have lived lives of love and service in the midst of hatred, violence and injustice. They are ever-present with us at our Tables of Friendship.

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 this bread to us now, saying: **(All raise bread)**

**ALL:** *Take and eat, this is my very Self given to you. (pause)*

When supper ends, Jesus takes the cup, speaks the grace, and offers it to us now, saying: **(All raise cup)**

**ALL:** *Take and drink this cup of my life, the life force of the new and everlasting covenant. It is poured out for you and for all, so that you might be free. Whenever you re-member me like this, I am among you. (pause)*

In sharing this bread and cup, let us embrace the Gospel of justice and peace as we proclaim this mystery of faith:

**ALL:** Nurtured by your word, nourished by your food;  
Called anew to be your people, we acclaim your praise!

4. As we celebrate this sacred meal, we recall the wise and gracious gifts bestowed on us down through the ages; and we look forward in hope, knowing that you, our wise and faithful God, will continue to endow us with abundant blessings.

**(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

In the power of this Eucharistic meal, O Divine Spirit, and in union with all peoples, we unite our thoughts and prayers, asking for wisdom and courage:

5. To discern more wisely the Spirit's call to us in the circumstances of our daily lives;
6. To act justly and courageously in confronting the pain and suffering that desecrates the Earth and its peoples;
7. To take risks in being creative and proactive on behalf of the poor and marginalized.

**(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: ***I Received the Living God***, Artist(s): Music is Public Domain, Arranged by Steve Grundy Publisher: ©2002, OCP

<https://youtu.be/crgIRDh6laA?si=PEV81tHs5EuLOB&t=116>

**(video, begin at 1.55)**

**Refrain:** I received the Living God,  
and my heart is full of joy. (x2)

Jesus said: I am the Truth;  
If you follow close to me.  
you will know me in your heart,  
and my word shall make you free. **R**

Jesus said: I am the Life,  
far from whom no thing can grow,  
but receive this living bread,  
and my Spirit you shall know. **R**

*Together we pray in the Name of Jesus:*

1. 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.
2. 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.

3. For you are the dwelling place within us,  
The empowerment around us,  
And the celebration among us, now and forever. Amen.

#### Closing Prayer

We have been birthed into wholeness, O Revealer of Insight, and Your Spirit has given us a new place to stand. We are enlivened by this sacrament of remembrance, and through your liberating teaching that the Law is meant to expand equality, joy, and life—not limit it. The Law frees us for celebration. We proclaim our thanks for Jesus, our brother, the embodiment of a new covenant. Amen.

#### Announcements

Blessing: *Please extend your hands for our mutual blessing:*

4. May the Divine Light nurture our dreams.  
May we unfurl the ribbon of light that is the Divine in us.
5. May we walk in holy boldness and humble bravery.  
May we be a blessing in our time!

Held together by Love Divine,  
Clothed with the nature of Jesus our Companion,  
And reinforced by the strength of the +Holy Spirit,  
We go forth in love and service to others. Amen.

Closing Song: **God Has Chosen Me**, by Bernadette Farrell; © 2012 OCP. Recorded live at St. Francis de Sales Church in Ajax, Ontario, Canada by the Sunday 7pm choir

<https://youtu.be/OVWlpHq1Ctc?si=fpLa1tS7ShuL0rj3> (lyric/video)

God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring new sight to those searching for light:  
God has chosen me, chosen me:

**Refrain:** And to tell the world that God's kingdom is near,  
to remove oppression and breakdown fear,  
yes, God's time is near; God's time is near,

God's time is near; God's time is near.

God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to set alight a new fire.

God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring to birth a new kindom on Earth:  
God has chosen me, chosen me: **R**

God is calling me, God is calling me  
in all whose cry is unheard.  
God is calling me, God is calling me  
to raise up the voice with no power or choice:  
God is calling me, calling me: **R**

***Thank you for your courage to worship with us in the spirit of  
equality and justice!  
You are welcome to join us again and support this Community with your  
presence and prayer!***

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