



Community of St. Bridget
an inclusive catholic experience
Sixth Sunday of Easter – May 5, 2024
5/6: Jewish Holocaust Remembrance Day
Liturgist/Homilist: Rose Gordyan



diocesan.com - Love One Another

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

All are welcome to come into this space which we make special by our 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.

ALL: Let us celebrate the richness and diversity of life, *ALLELUIA!*

Lighting of the Easter Candle

From the fire of the Easter Vigil celebrated throughout the world, to the St. Bridget flame from Ireland, 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.

Opening Song: ***Womb of Life and Source of Being*** sung by Heather Jordan; Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947 Music: Skinner Chavez-Melo, 1944-1992

[Womb of Life & Source of Being \(youtube.com\)](#) (no video)

Womb of life and source of being, home of ev'ry restless heart,
in your arms the worlds awakened; you have loved us from the start.

We, your children, gather round you, at the table you prepare.
Sharing stories, tears, and laughter, we are nurtured by your care.

Word in flesh, our brother Jesus, born to bring us second birth,
you have come to stand beside us, knowing weakness, knowing earth.
Priest who shares our human struggles, Life of life and Death of death,
risen Christ, come stand among us, send the Spirit by your breath.

Brooding Spirit, move among us; be our partner, be our friend.
When our mem'ry fails, remind us whose we are, what we intend.
Labor with us; aid the birthing of the new world yet to be,
free of servant, lord, and master, free for love and unity.

Mother, Brother, holy Partner; Father, Spirit, Only Son:
we would praise your name forever, One-in-Three and Three-in-One.
We would share your life, your passion, share your word of world made new,
ever singing, ever praising, one with all, and one with you.

Today we celebrate the Sixth Sunday of Easter where we focus on the
Boundless Love of God and the Transformation of this Love in our lives. We are
commissioned with the words to "Love one another." We also honor the Jewish
Holocaust Remembrance Day tomorrow. We continue to raise our Alleluia
voices loud and clear as we join Jesus with resurrected hearts. And we begin in
the name of our Sacred Essence: Source of All Being, Eternal Word, and +Holy
Wisdom-Sophia. Amen.

Affirmation of Baptism

In this Easter Season, we celebrate and reaffirm the Christian initiation of our
Baptism with the signing of baptismal waters-- reminding and reaffirming our
commitment to the Holy Spirit in our lives. As we come together today to
celebrate Eucharist, we will affirm this initiation each and every time we break
bread together this Eastertime.

All present are asked to bless themselves with the sacred water from our Earth, and sing:

Cantor: We shall draw water joyfully, singing joyfully, singing joyfully!
We shall draw water joyfully from the wellsprings of God's mercy!

God has untied the knots that bind us, and through this life-giving water and
living Spirit among us, brought us to life anew. May this Spirit-filled grace
renew us as we embrace the promise of eternal life in God's Presence. Amen.

Gloria: Praise, Give Glory to God by Denise Pyles on *Creation of Love*, © 2010-03-
19. <https://youtu.be/tA22QokvwPA> (no video; begin at 0:20)

Praise, praise, give glory to God! Nations, peoples, give glory!
Strong the love embracing us, faithful our God forever.
Alleluia, alleluia! (x3)

Opening Prayer:

1. O Holy One, it is good news indeed that there is no hiding from the Risen One. He comes to us breathing the Spirit into our unbelieving hearts and offering us a peace which surpasses all understanding:
2. ...the peace of renewed purpose, of a blessed unrest, of realizing that the Easter story is about our own resurrection after all, and that there is work to be done:

ALL: ...proclaiming God's love, healing the brokenhearted, speaking out for creation, and above all, opening to the evolving push and pull of Spirit's call. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD*

We now call upon the Spirit of our Living God as we listen to the Scripture readings broken open and shared by all!

First Reading: Acts 10:24-28, 34-35, 44-48

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles:

Peter arrived in Caesarea at the invitation of Cornelius, a Gentile. Cornelius was expecting him and had called together his relatives and close friends. Cornelius met Peter at the entryway to the house and fell at his feet in homage. Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said. "I, too, am only a human being!"

As they conversed, Peter went into the house and found many people gathered together. Peter spoke to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Judean to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean... I most certainly understand now that God does not show favoritism. All who revere God and do what is right are accepted by God.

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the word. The circumcised believers who came with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit should have been poured out on the Gentiles also. They heard the Gentiles speaking in tongues and exalting God. Peter responded, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit even as we have?" Peter ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus the Christ. They asked Peter to stay on for a few days.

The inspired word of an Early Church Historian. Amen.

Responsorial: Psalm 98 (Nan Merrill, adapted)

Cantor: *Love does marvelous things!*

O Sing to the Beloved a new song, for Love has done marvelous things! By the strength of your Indwelling Presence, we, too, are called to do great things. We are set free through Love's forgiveness and truth. **R**

Yes, Your steadfast love and faithfulness are an ever-present gift in our lives. All the ends of the earth have seen the glory of Love's eternal flame. **R**

Shout for joy to the Beloved, all the earth! Burst into jubilant song with music! Sing your gratitude! Make music resound! Make music your praise! **R**

Cantor: Celtic Alleluia

Second Reading - Gospel: John 15:9-15, 17.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John:

As the Beloved loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love. In the same way, I have kept our Loving God's commandments and remain in God's love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what the slave owner is doing. I call you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from the Beloved. This I command you: love one another.

The inspired words of the evangelist, John. Amen.

Cantor: Celtic Alleluia

Third Reading: 1 John 4:7-9, 11-13, 16.

A reading from the first letter of John:

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love, does not know God; for God is love. God's love was made manifest among us. God sent God's Chosen One into the world that we might live as Jesus lived, that we might live in love. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and God's love is made complete in us, and thus we "see" God. We know that we abide in God and God in us, because God has breathed into us God's own Spirit. So, we

know and rely on the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

The inspired word of an Early Church Theologian. Amen.

Homily/Reflection: Rose Gordyan

“No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends”
(John 15:13)

Mom, I’m your favorite. Right?

No, I’m Mom’s favorite. Tell him Mom.

As my sons were growing up, they each wanted to be the “favorite”.

Does God have favorites? All that is are God’s favorites.

Previously to today’s readings in Acts, Peter struggles with this new insight. God speaks to him three times in a vision so that he is able to say to Cornelius, who is a Gentile, “In truth. I see that God shows no partiality.” He has come to realize that the “fear of God” is not cowering or cringing before God. Rather it is becoming enraptured with the Holy One whose immense love is beyond comprehension. Then Peter responds and realizes this love is from the Spirit. He learns that this gift is knowing that this immense love is for God, self, others and all that is created. Peter is still trying to understand that God’s chosen ones do not put obstacles between others, but accept the workings of the Spirit. Like a parent who loves each child differently yet equally, so is the Divine embrace.

The evangelist John uses the term “disciple” more than seventy times to refer to all women and men who believed in and followed Jesus. In the Gospel reading Jesus speaks to us of a new commandment, “to love one another.” In biblical terms, the word “love” designates acts of loving kindness. This shows that they are part of a community of chosen ones of the Creator and friends of the Holy One. We are commanded to be this way toward all, no matter how we might feel about them or whether they return the love offered. This command might seem overwhelming. But Jesus assures the disciples that when they ask the Divine, the Grace will be given. Trusting this brings an inner joy that is full!

To this day I tell my sons that they are both my favorites! They always laugh because they still always want to know about Mom and what she told each of them!

And yes, I would give my life for them and their families. Also, I would “usually get in trouble” for putting myself out there to help another in many situations.

Have you experienced yourself or another placing their life on the line as an act of love for another?

Holding all our shared thoughts in the sacred space among us, let us now proclaim our affirmation of faith:

Affirmation of Faith

3. 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.
4. We believe in Jesus, messenger of the Divine Word, bringer of healing, heart of Divine compassion, bright star in the firmament of the Holy One's prophets, mystics, and saints.
5. We believe that we are called to follow Jesus as a vehicle of Divine Love, a source of wisdom and truth, and an instrument of peace in the world.
6. We believe in the Spirit of the Holy One, the life that is our innermost life, the breath moving in our being, the depth of living in each of us.
7. We believe that the Compassion and Companionship of Jesus is here and now, stretched out all around us to empower those with eyes to see it, hearts to receive it, and hands to make it happen. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

1. Holy Wisdom whose presence fills our ever-expanding universe, you live in every insect, flower, and beast. You are the ultimate depth of everything that exists.
2. Knowing this, we bring you our cares and concerns—for our families, our countries, our leaders, and our world. After each request, we respond:
Risen Jesus, we awaken to your call!

For whom and for what shall we pray?

3. All knowing and ever living Source of Light, we give back to you what you have so graciously given to each of us. We trust that by breaking open our hearts, our lives will bear fruit. We hope that by following Jesus' lead, we will fall in love with the Spirit that dwells within us and thereby love all who we touch.

4. Seed of Compassion, hold these prayers, and the prayers hidden deep within our hearts not yet ready to surface, within your ever-loving embrace. Amen

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Sign of Peace

As we prepare for the 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 risen brother, Jesus, offers be always with us! Amen.

Offertory (All raise the 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.

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

5. Holy Mystery, may our strength be renewed by your generous blessings that will bring us health of mind and body. Grant that the healing work which you have begun in the life, death, and rising again of Jesus, bring us to eternal life in Your Presence. We ask this through Jesus, our brother. Amen.

The Holy One is with us, abounding in Love!

6. 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.
7. We praise you, O God of wonder and life, with greater joy than ever during this Easter Season, as we celebrate Jesus' life and ministry as witness to the life of compassion and love we are all called to live. As the universe resounds with Easter joy, we lift up our hearts with the choirs of angels and sing this endless hymn of your glory:

Holy, Holy, Holy by Christopher Grundy on *Stepping In* © 2012.

<https://youtu.be/GUm2bEGB2dU> (no video)

Holy, holy, holy God of love and justice
The whole universe and everything beyond it,
Every galaxy and flower,
Every singing bird and falling drop of rain
Is ablaze
With your glory, glory, glory!
O, God most wonderful.

Blessed is the One who comes in your name!
Hosannah! Hosannah!

1. Loving Creator, 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 this Spirit, your creative goodness blooms anew, amid the variety and wonder of life.

ALL: Generous Gifter of Life, make us ever more aware of the presence of Your Spirit in these, our gifts, as we 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. 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.

On the night before he died, Jesus did more than ask us to remember him. He showed us how to live when he washed the feet of his friends. At the Table, he took the Passover Bread, spoke the grace, broke the bread and offers it to us now, saying:

ALL: *Take and eat, all of you. This is my very Self, the Bread of Life given to strengthen you. (All raise bread)*

Jesus then raised a cup of blessing, spoke the grace, and offers it to us now, saying:

ALL: *Take and drink of this Cup of my life-blood, the Covenant made new again through my life in you. Whenever you remember me like this, I am among you. (All raise cup)*

We raise our voices to the sacred presence of our Loving God:

ALL: In every creature that has ever breathed, *Christ has lived*
In every living being that has passed on before us, *Christ is transformed*
In our breaking open the word and the bread, *Christ is with us still*
In everything yet to be, *Christ will come again.*

(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!

We pray as these gifts are shared among us:

4. Loving Teacher, you call us to live the Gospel of peace and justice,
We will live justly.

5. Loving Companion, you call us to be your presence in the world.
We will love tenderly.

6. Loving Prophet, you call us to speak truth to power.
We will walk with integrity in your abiding presence.

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

ALL: We share this bread and cup today committing ourselves to be Easter people, people who see beyond the barriers, the pain, the darkness and hard times, people who live in faith, hope and love in all the seasons of our lives whatever the ups and downs.

All are welcome to receive at our Tables of Friendship!

Communion Meditation: *All You Ask* by The Many; Provided to YouTube by CDBaby
All You Ask · The Many Love > Fear © 2019 Plural Guild

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENgHSgdFrw8> (no video)

You don't ask us to get on our hands and knees
You don't ask us to crawl in the dust
You don't ask us to say the right words, cross our t's

Refrain: You don't ask us to believe
All you ask, All you ask
All you ask us is
to be love, love,
to be love, love.

You don't ask us to do it all perfectly

You don't ask us if we are enough
You don't ask us to all be alike or agree **R**

(bridge)

Let us be here in your love
Always only be your love
Be your hands and arms of love
Be your voice and heart of love (repeats)

Let us be your love **R**

We pray to God as Jesus did: (An adaptation for our times by Lenora Rand)

7. God of Love, who we experience as mother, father, friend, lover,
our deepest longing, our best thought our solid ground, the sacred soil
from which everything grows, our greatest hope.

1. Your love covers the entire earth, holding us all in your embrace.
You hold everything together.
We want to know what your vision for the world is - help us.
We want to live in that vision - guide us.

2. Everything we eat and drink, everything that gives us life and joy,
it all comes from you.

3. We want to thank you for your mercy. You hold nothing back.
Help us be that open and generous with others and with ourselves.
Help us forgive each other.

4. Deep in our hearts we believe that this is your world and that you love us
all. Help us live with you and with each other in that powerful love.
And together we will sing of your mercy and grace and power, forever and
ever. Amen.

Closing Prayer

God of Love and Light, you have given us the gift of love to believe in ourselves.
We are transformed and commissioned to love one another as you have loved
us. Give us the strength and courage to break down barriers and show our
love on behalf of justice for all who are forgotten and no longer have a voice. By
working for peace in the midst of suffering from the effects of war. We, your
loved ones, ask for your guidance to continue to follow the mission of Love and
build your Kin-dom. Amen.

Announcements

Blessing - Our Risen Christ is in, through and among us. **ALL:** Alleluia!

Let us extend our hands to one another for our mutual blessing:

5. Our Loving God blesses us. We courageously vow to live the blessing and example Jesus gave through his willingness to share with us his life and love. Amen.

6. Through Jesus' life and ministry, wholeness has been restored. We rejoice in knowing that God fulfills the promises made to us, and are blessed with the abiding Presence of Love forever. Amen.

We go into this week, held together by the Source of All That Is, clothed in the nature of Jesus our Companion, and reinforced by the strength of the +Spirit within us. Amen.

(chanted) Go in the peace of Christ, Alleluia! Alleluia!

Cantor: *(chanted)* Thanks be to God, Alleluia! Alleluia!

Closing Hymn: ***Love is Calling*** by Denise Pyles; Provided to YouTube by Ingrooves;
Album: Weaver God © 2010 Denise Pyles

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIOyXrY44Tk> (no video)

Wake up, it's a sunny day; no storm clouds in my way
Love is calling: there's work to be done for our God

What a day God has made, giving us the chance to pray
Thank you, Jesus! I'm ready to work for our God

(bridge) I'm alive, I can see
I can praise the One in any way

So, get up and get on your way
Make the most of this glorious day
Love is calling you: there's work to be done for our God

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

*Today's Scripture readings are taken from the Comprehensive Catholic Lectionary made available through the Women's Ordination Conference.