



Community of St. Bridget
an inclusive catholic experience

Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time – October 6, 2024

Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4, 2024

Liturgist: Nancy Tondy



In All Their Splendor: Nancy Tondy

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

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: **God, Make Me a Channel (Prayer of St. Francis)**, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan © 2017 Worldmaking.net.

<https://youtu.be/kM11O4ZysCE?si=eDPJgQ8faiWoO9-M> (lyric video)

Refrain: God, make me a channel of your peace flowing from your river
God, make me a channel of your peace flowing from your river

Where there is hate, we plant love
Where there is hurt, forgiveness

Where there is doubt, we plant faith
And where despair, hopefulness. **R**

As we celebrate the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, our readings remind us of the Love that never ends, poured out in a vast and expanding universe. In the Gospel, Jesus directs us to the natural world, to let it teach us, to nourish and heal us. St. Francis witnesses to this: the more we realize we belong to creation, and it belongs to us, the better we can live together in reconciliation and peace. And so, we pray in the Name of the Divine: Source of All Being, Eternal Word, and Holy Wisdom-Sophia. Amen.

Transformation Rite: *

God of All Creation, we thank you for this time to reflect and contemplate. Help us to surrender and be transformed.

1. Send us the flood of salty tears when it is time to acknowledge and release. Let the rivers flow from us, creating movement and health in our watery bodies.

ALL: Help us to surrender.

2. Show us how to give in and not give up. Remind us that there is a time to make decisions and a much-needed time to sit with our feelings and to patiently await decision making.

ALL: Help us to surrender.

3. Teach us to let go of false ideas and expectations, of triggers and habits that linger in our bodies and harm us. Help us welcome the wisdom of our ancestors, the guidance of angels, and the nourishment of creation.

ALL: Help us to surrender.

4. Let Spirit wash over us like great wide waves, so that we may know both the depths of our own Mystery and how Love holds and nurtures us, even when it feels like we are drowning.

ALL: Help us to surrender.

5. Be a reminder to us that the skin we shed today will feed the soil, and that the shell that protects us can crack and crumble into useful organic material—an offering to Earth for her willingness to do our composting.

ALL: Empty us, then fill us up again with what has always been ours, that which is decidedly of You. Amen.

Transforming our hearts in compassion and sharing your love with one another, we join with all creation in the cosmic dance of praise!

Gloria Richard Bruxvoort Colligan and the River's Voice *Wordmaking* © 2004.

https://youtu.be/HP8NkIp44nU?si=aY6vqjoX55ZG_reg&t=56

(set to start at 0.55)

Gloria! Gloria! Highest Glory to You!
Gloria! Gloria! Highest Glory to You!

Maker, Spirit, Friend, you are Great Mystery.

Gloria! Gloria! Highest Glory to You!
Gloria! Gloria! Highest Glory to You!

Opening Prayer

Spirit of Life, our brother Francis of Assisi reflected the image of Christ through his commitment to peace and his gentleness toward all creatures. May we never cease to be awed by the vastness of the universe, the blue of the sky, the green of the grass, the fullness of the moon; the dance of the bee, the elegance of the butterfly, and the ubiquity of the breeze that is your very breath. May your infinite compassion grow in us and move outward to embrace everyone we meet. 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: Genesis 1:24-25

A reading from the book of Genesis:

God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle, creeping things and wild animals of the earth." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that crawls upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

The inspired words of our ancient spiritual tradition. Amen.

Responsorial: Psalm 148:1-5, 7-12

Cantor: *We praise You, Alleluia!*

Praise God!
Alleluia from the heavens! Praise God in the spheres.
Praise God, all angels! Sing alleluia, Cosmic glory. **R**

Praise God, sun and moon. Praise God, all you shining stars.
Praise God, deepest space, and all beyond the universe.
Let them praise the Holy Name;
for God spoke, and they were created. **R**

Praise God from the earth,
you great sea creatures in all the deeps;
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy winds that do God's bidding.
You mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;
wild animals and all cattle, small creatures, and flying birds. **R**

Rulers of the earth and all peoples,
leaders and *all* who abide on the earth.
All young men and women alike,
people of all genders, old and young together. **R**

Cantor: Alleluias

Second Reading - Gospel: Luke 12:22-28

A reading from the Holy Gospel attributed to Luke:

Then Jesus said to his disciples: "I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear. Life is more than food and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens. They do not sow or reap. They have no storeroom or barn. Yet God feeds them.

"Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?"

Consider how the wildflowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet, I tell you, not even Solomon - in all his splendor - was dressed like one of these. If God so clothes the grass in the field that grows today and is thrown in the oven tomorrow, will God not provide much more for you, O you of little faith?

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

Cantor: Alleluias

Third Reading: Excerpt from *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* (adapted)

A reading from the writings of St. Francis of Assisi:

May God give you peace. ... As you announce peace with your mouth, make sure that greater peace is in your hearts. ... Let everyone be drawn to peace and kindness through your peace and gentleness. Peace comes from the heart, and if peace can transform us from within, then peace will guide us as we travel through the world.

The inspired words of St. Francis of Assisi. Amen.

Shared Homily: Nancy Tondy

You may have heard the story of a little fish who swims up to its mother and asks, *“What is water? And where can I find it? I need water or I will die.”* Humans can be like that about creation, seeing ourselves *apart from it* instead of *a part of it*. But today’s readings underscore this: we are immersed in God’s creation, swimming in God’s grace. Francis of Assisi understood it well. He knew that everything God loves has value. He showed us what it means to embody love on Earth by loving every part of the natural world; by calling the sun, moon, and every creature brother or sister; and by embracing the whole world as his monastery.

How do we reconcile today’s beautiful readings with the chaos in our world right now? Wars in the Middle East and in dozens of other places. Drought, famine, floods, mudslides, and wildfires that wipe out whole communities and leave hundreds dead, injured, or missing. School shootings, disease, economic disparity, racism, and political turmoil. Just hearing about the pain and trauma can be overwhelming.

The Gospel of Luke was written in such a time, a period of violence and destruction when the Romans besieged Jerusalem, desecrated its Temple, and killed and enslaved the citizens. And in our passage from Luke, Jesus says, *“Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?”*

Just prior to this part, Jesus was teaching, and a large crowd surrounded him. A man called out, “Tell my brother to give me my share of our inheritance.” Jesus responded, “Friend, who makes me your judge or arbiter?” And then he turned to the crowd and told a parable, about a man who reaps a harvest so great that he decides to tear down all his barns and build bigger ones to store the bounty the land has yielded. The man then dies before ever having a chance to enjoy his riches.

During this tumultuous time, Jesus is warning against emotional attachment—not only to possessions but also ways of thinking and behaving. Attachment to buildings and bank accounts; privilege and progress; even anger, resentment,

and despair. Jesus is turning our attention away from these attachments and toward the kingdom of God, where loving our neighbors and honoring all creatures are what really matter. It's where every life matters. Every act of kindness matters; what we learn and how we pray matter; who we celebrate and how we care for the land really matter.

Francis of Assisi spent his life imitating Jesus the Christ, acquiring *peace that comes from the heart*. At the end of his life, Francis famously said, "I have done what is mine to do. May Christ teach you what is yours!" May we allow the earth to teach us, and may we find the peace that can transform us from within.

I invite you to share the wisdom welling up in you today.

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. O Holy One, Creator of this vast universe:

We believe that you are not far from us, and that your loving care is shown in the life, ministry, death, and continued presence of Jesus, the Christ, whom you sent to show us the way to your living presence.

7. We believe that each of us is called to continue your presence and your work in this world by loving and caring for one another.

1. We believe that no one is beyond the reach of your love, and so no one should be beyond the reach of our caring. We believe that you call us to be one with you and with one another.

2. We believe that we have in our hearts the grace and inspiration of the Holy Spirit to live fully in your love when we are open to you.

3. We believe that you pardon our weaknesses and use them to teach us how to come to you. We believe in the resurrection of Jesus in our lives, and life everlasting in your Divine Presence.

4. May God, the source of all patience and encouragement, enable us to live as we believe, in harmony with one another so that with our hearts and voices and lives, we may glorify the God who names us and calls us to live in the fullness of being. 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!

5. 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.

6. 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 St. Francis and all the saints and angels:

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!

7. 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.

1. 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 in our time of need.

2. 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:

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

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

5. 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: **Sing a Gentle Love Song**, Kathy Sherman, CSJ on *Song of the Universe*. 2022.

https://youtu.be/id1_Y04DIoA?si=G2yr1Ng4ZDTXg0D8 (no video)

Sing a gentle love song
Sing to Earth
Fill the air with music for her healing.

Then
Be still and you will hear
Her love song forever sung to you.

Together, we lift our voices in the Name of Jesus:***

6. O Creative breath, ebbing and flowing through all forms,
soften the ground of our being and hollow a place
for the planting of your presence.

7. Moving to the heartbeat of your purpose,
make us the embodiment of your compassion.
Fill us with your creativity, that we might bear the fruit of your vision.

1. Give us the wisdom to produce and share
what each one needs to grow and flourish.
Untie the tangled webs of destiny that bind us
as we release others from the entanglements of past mistakes.

2. And let us not be seduced by that
which would divert us from our true purpose,
but illuminate the path before us.

ALL: For you are the ground of the fruitful vision,
the birthing power, and the fulfillment,
as all is gathered and made whole once again. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Blessed Source of Joy, we thank you for this time together. Make us ready to journey where your Spirit beckons, like the geese who fly without ceasing through all kinds of weather. Help us to focus on the work at hand, like the honeybees gathering their nectar, pollinating the future. When it is time to let go, let us release freely, like the leaves of trees that have come into their full autumn color. Let us always hear the love song pouring forth from you. Amen.

Announcements

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

May all our worry and anxiousness be transfigured. May peace fill our hearts and our world.

3. God on the outside, endlessly spacious
Ageless and audacious, lush and wild
I am laid low and humbled, awed by the Splendor.

ALL: Let me remember I belong to the Universe.

4. God on the inside, and in all places
Forever gracious, love without end
Witness inside me, see all that I see.
Silently guide me.
Your love includes me and transcends.

ALL: For You are the Love that never ends.

We go our own ways but will not be separated, for we are 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: **Thank God and Sing Praise**, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan and the River's Voice. (2004)

<https://youtu.be/-I16aua1-u8> (no video)

Refrain: Thank God and sing praise,
Raise our voices higher
Proclaim Christ's way.
Thank God and sing praise,
Make the circle wider
All who know the taste of grace.

God's people gathered all over the world
Led on in promise, sent forth in joy
Without shouts of thanksgiving all over the world
Sing Hallelujah! **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.***

* Transformation Rite: Pixie Lighthorse, *Prayers of Honoring*, 2016 (adapted).

** First Reading, Second Reading, Psalm: *Comprehensive Catholic Lectionary*, published by Women's Ordination Conference. Third Reading: *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, 3 vols., edited by Regis Armstrong, J. A. Wayne Hellmann and William Short.

*** Jesus Prayer: An interpretation from the Aramaic, *Center for Christogenesis* (online).

**** Final Blessing: John Slade, co-founder of Ojai Church of the Wild, as printed in *Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us Into the Sacred* by Victoria Looz. Broadleaf Books: 2021.