

**Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community  
First Sunday of Advent – November 27, 2021  
Co- Presiders: Dotty Shugrue ARCWP and Joan Meehan  
Readers: Ann Cooke and Anna Davis  
Prayer Leaders: Beth Ponce and Joan Pesce  
IT: Peg Bowen**



**Co-President: Dotty.** <sup>1</sup> Good afternoon and welcome to the celebration of the Liturgy for the first Sunday of Advent. Let's pause and remember who we are as the community of Mary Mother of Jesus. We are inclusive, as all are welcome to be with us. We are committed to Gospel values in all that we do. We welcome active participation in our Liturgies. There is but one rubric, please unmute when you read or share and then remember to mute again when you are finished. So let us begin.

## The Blessing and Lighting of the Wreath

**Co-President: Joan M.** As we begin the Season of Advent Christians create a wreath with four candles. Advent candles readily demonstrate the strong contrast between darkness and light, which is an important biblical image. Jesus referred to himself as the "Light of the World" that dispels darkness: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). You are the light of the world let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to the Cosmic Christ. (Matthew 5:14-16)

Holy One, we believe that your Sacred Presence fills every space in the universe. All life is your life with us. Together we pour forth blessings on this Advent Wreath. We light the first week candle and we pray that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, born anew in us, Amen.

Theme: A Time for Dreaming – Believing - Preparing

**Co-President: Dotty.** As we gather in this circle to begin another Advent, let us share our dreams, our beliefs, and our ways of *preparing* for the Child of humanity, the Christ within. We prepare to bring the Christ, to give birth to new hopes. We *dream* and we *believe* that power lives within us as together we build the City of God.

Opening Song: *A Million Dreams* (from The Greatest Showman) - One Voice Children's Choir

<https://youtu.be/v49-3Xp5fPg>

**Transformation Rite:**

**Prayer Leader: Joan P**

Called to *dream* of a world that recognizes the presence of the Divine in all those we meet as we commit to consistently bring Christ into our world.

**Transform me Holy One**

Called to *believe* that our younger generations have vision and new perspectives in what the future holds and embrace the power we have to create peace.

**Transform me Holy One**

Called to *prepare* during this Advent Season to recognize that the Christ is born anew within us every day as we celebrate this profound Gift.

**Transform me Holy One**

**Reader: Anna Davis** This first reading is recorded in the Book of the prophet Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will bestow on Israel and Judah all the blessings I promised them. In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous branch from the line of David, who will bring justice and integrity to the land. In those days Judah will be safe, and Jerusalem will be secure. They will call the land, "YHWH is our Justice."

**These are the inspired words of the prophet Jeremiah, and the community affirms them by saying: AMEN**

**Reader: Ann Cooke** The second reading is excerpts from "The Reed of God" by Caryll Houselander.

**This time of Advent is essential to our contemplation. If we have truly given our humanity to be changed into Christ, it is essential to us that we do not disturb this time of growth. It is a time of darkness, of faith. We shall not see Christ's radiance in our lives yet; it is still hidden in our darkness; nevertheless, we must believe that He is growing in our lives; we must believe it so firmly that we cannot help relating everything, literally everything, to this almost incredible reality. This attitude makes every moment of every day and night a prayer.**

**This Advent awareness does not lead to a selfish preoccupation with self; it does not exclude outgoing love to others—far from it. It leads to them inevitably, but it prevents such acts and words of love from becoming distractions. It makes the very doing of them reminders of the Presence of Christ in us. It is through doing them that we can preserve the secrecy of Advent without failing to offer the loveliness of Christ in us to others.**

**When a woman is carrying a child, she develops a certain instinct of self-defense. It is not selfishness; it is not egoism. It is an absorption into the life within, a folding of self like a little tent around the child's frailty, a God-like instinct to cherish, and some day to bring forth, the life. A closing upon it like the petals of a flower closing upon the dew that shines in its heart.**

**This is precisely the attitude we must have to Christ, the Life within us, in the Advent of our contemplation. This dependence of Christ lays a great trust upon us. During this tender time of Advent we must carry**

**Him in our hearts to wherever He may never go unless we take Him to them.**

**These are the inspired words of the mystic Caryl Houselander, and the community affirms them by saying:  
AMEN**

**Celtic Alleluia**

<https://youtu.be/o1rc7ojQtJU>

**Reader: Joan P.** The Gospel is taken from the writings of the apostle called John.

**In the beginning the Word was and the Word was one with God; and the Word was God; through the Word all things came into being and nothing came into being apart from the Word. That which came into being in the Word was Life and the Life was the light of humanity; and the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness never overpowered it.**

**These are the inspired word in the gospel of the apostle called John and the community affirms them by saying:  
AMEN**

**Celtic Alleluia**

<https://youtu.be/o1rc7ojQtJU>

**Shared Homily**

**Co-President: Joan M.** Let us pray our beliefs as we profess our faith:

**We gratefully believe in a God who feels our deepest struggles and celebrates our greatest joys. A God who**

**both dances with us in celebration and holds us when we cry. This God is not "other" to us, but shares our breath in every moment, and promises we are never alone.**

**We believe in a God who believes in us--believes that we are precious and incredible gifts, worthy to claim image and likeness to the divine.**

**We hold fast to our God who journeys with us, who continually calls us to choose the shape of our days through the choices we make. This God accepts us as we are and shares each hope we have for our becoming.**

**This is the God in whom we believe, our Creator, our Mother and Father who became human in Jesus, our brother, and has always lived in human hearts.**

**Our God is the Spirit of Life, the voice that continues to speak love, and asks us to answer.**

***In this God we choose to believe. And together we say: Amen.***

***(Joan Meehan has shared this Creed with us. It is written by The Friends in Faith)***

**Prayer Leader: Beth Ponce** We pray together our prayers of petition:

**As we prepare for this sacred meal, we are aware that just as Mary awaits the birth of her child, we too are waiting for the healing power of the Christ in us and in our world. We voice our intentions today as we pray....**

**We bring to the table our grave concern about the continued spread of the Covid virus. We pray for those persons in our country, in our world who suffer from**

disease especially from Covid 19. We pray they may experience love and support as they heal.

We bring to the table our our elected officials that they will remember their duty to create programs and structures that serve the needs of all Americans as well as those who seek refuge in our country.

We bring to the table the immigrant children and the countless men and women still being held in inhumane conditions by our own government. We pray our elected officials will act to create those procedures that will right this terrible wrong.

We bring to the table all members of our MMOJ community that any personal suffering will be healed, that they may find strength in the love we share with one another.

**(For what else do we pray? Share any of your petitions)**

**Co-President: Joan M.** Holy One, blessed are we as we gather around our tables to celebrate the memory of Jesus. He lived among us teaching us to dream of a world healed and made whole, to believe in the power of Divine Presence within us and to prepare for the birthing of the Christ within. With this bread and wine, we pledge ourselves to the teachings of Jesus as revealed in the Gospels. We accept our call to be present to all people in our world. We are committed to the teachings and the ministry of Jesus.

The Holy One is praised forever.

**Prayer Leader: Beth Ponce** Please join in praying the Eucharistic prayer:

O Holy One, you are always with us. In the blessed abundance of creation, we gather to celebrate Your

**nourishing gift of life. May our hearts be open to You as You invite us to participate in the wise and wonderful work of co-creation.**

**May we be ever aware of Your Spirit within and among us as our world unfolds amid pain and beauty into the fullness of life.**

**May we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus as we focus on this Advent for the Christ born again within each of us.**

**We are grateful for Your Spirit whose breath inspired the primal waters, calling into being the variety and abundance we see around us. Your Spirit sustains us and gives us hope in our every endeavor, inviting us to act in wisdom and in truth.**

**In gratitude and joy, we lift our voices to proclaim a song of praise:**

***Here in This Place* by Christopher Grundy**  
see <https://youtu.be/sgkWXOSGmOQ>

**Co-President: Joan M.**

**As your people, we gather in the power of your Spirit. As followers of Jesus, we seek to live as wise and holy Spirit-filled people: courageous, prophetic, ever hopeful and hope-filled as we answer your call to serve one another.**

**[Please extend your hands over your bread and wine]**

**We invoke Your Spirit upon these gifts of this Eucharistic table, bread of the grain and wine of the grape, that they may become gifts of wisdom, light and truth which remind us of our call to be the body of Christ to the world.**

**Co-President: Dotty** On the night before he faced his own death, Jesus sat at supper with his companions and friends. He reminded them of all that he taught them, and

to fix that memory clearly, he bent down and washed their feet.

**[lifting bread]**

When he returned to his place, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and offered it to them saying: Take and eat; this is my very self.

**[lifting cup]**

Jesus then raised a cup of blessing, spoke the grace, and offered the wine saying: *Take and drink of the covenant made new again through my life in you. Whenever you remember me like this, I am among you.*

This is the bread of life and cup of blessing. May our eating and drinking strengthen our hope!

**Co-President: Joan M.**

What we have heard with our ears, we will live with our lives; as we share communion, we will become communion, both Love's nourishment and Love's challenge.

**Receive bread and cup now with the words "You are the face of God"**

Communion Meditation/Song: Lo How A Rose E're Blooming – Piano by Linda Lee

<https://youtu.be/Sqrn9DbQqVg>

[Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming](#)

**(Pause after music)**

**Prayer Leader: Joan P.** Sacred Spirit, we remember Mary, the Mother of Humanity, who birthed Jesus into our world. We rejoice that the Universal Christ remains always and

ever present within and around us. We remember all those who have transitioned from life on earth to complete union with the Sacred Presence: Mary of Nazareth and all great saints, prophets, and martyrs. We remember our sister priests, strong extraordinary women: Adele, Judy, Tish, Joan, Michele, and Sally. We remember, too, family members, friends, and member of MMOJ. **(Pause to remember names)** We remember all those whose lives have been lost to Covid, to war, to racism and all other "isms" that exist in our world. And we remember those you wish to be remembered.... All are beloved souls who have blessed our lives and who continue to inspire us.

And we respond together: So Be It

**Prayer Leader: Beth Ponce.** Let us pray the prayer of Jesus:

O Holy One, who is 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 our 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

*(Miriam Therese Winter)*

**Co-President: Joan. M.** Holy One, your transforming energy is ever present, moving within and working through us. With joyful hope, may our lives glorify you at this time and in all ways. Amen.

**Community Prayers of Gratitude----Announcements**

**Co-President: Dotty.** Let us extend our hands in blessing one another.

**May the Holy One bless us as we dream in infinite possibilities.**

**May we let our dreams urge us to prepare to meet the reality of the day with the dream and hope of tomorrow.**

**May we recognize the Holy One in our lives, the Divine Presence within us as we bring our dreams to fruition.**

**DREAM, DREAM, DREAM of ways to enlighten humanity to recognize that "God is always and forever with us."**

**Closing Song: The Power of the Dream by Celine Dion**

**<https://youtu.be/svob8WXBwyQ>**

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