**Solidarity with Sisters Communal Prayer for Sunday, Feb. 14, 2021**

 **Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

 ***I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble,***

***And you fill me with the joy of salvation.*** [*Ps 32:11*](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/psalms/32?1)

**CHECK-IN and then mute everyone. (Betty Thompson)**

**WELCOME (Suzie De Quattro)**

Welcome, everyone!

* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* Thanks to Joan and Stu Sklamm for preparing today’s communal prayer and to Stu and Reggie Ott for making our music.
* Thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today: Mia and Tim Brown, Sylvia and Kevin Lynch, and Joan and Stu Sklamm.
* We invite you to join us on Wednesday, February 17, at 7:30 p.m. for our Ash Wednesday Prayer Service.
* If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please get in touch.

**SETTLING IN (Suzie De Quattro)**

We are not all in the same place, but we can still be together by sharing a common breath.  So let us begin by slowly taking one collective breath together -  in and out.   With each breath let the Spirit of God settle deeper into you as you exhale tensions from your body and distractions from your mind.  In and out.   Now let’s take 3 more breaths.  One to be here…one to be together…and one to make space for what God has incarnated in you.

Now **Stu Sklamm** will lead us into our celebration of the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time and the feast day of St. Valentine.

**OPENING –**  **(Stu Sklamm)**

**EYE HAS NOT SEEN**

**Refrain**

Eye has not seen, ear has not heard

what God has ready for those who love him;

Spirit of love, come, give us the mind of Jesus,

teach us the wisdom of God,

**Verse I**

When pain and sorrow weigh us down,

be near to us, O Lord,

forgive the weakness of our faith,

and bear us up within your peaceful word.

**Refrain**

**Verse III**

To those who see with eyes of faith,

the Lord is ever near,

reflected in the faces of all the poor

and lowly of the world.

**Refrain**

**GREETING (Joan Sklamm)**

Beloved Community, rejoice!

*Blessed is the one whose fault is taken away,*

 *Whose sin is covered.*

*Blessed the one to whom the LORD imputes not guilt.*

**All:** And all God’s people reply: Amen! Alleluia!

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Joan Sklamm)**

We come together today because it is with each other that we experience ourselves as the people of God and the body of Christ revealed to all nations.  We gather to celebrate the great fact that our merciful God is in love with us. We are confident that in this next hour God will act in us and through us. We believe that God will give us light for our next step. And now **Suzie DeQuattro** will lead us in prayer.

**GATHERING PRAYER (Suzie DeQuattro)**

Loving God, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a loving and just community that vulnerably shares each other’s burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts’ longings for the healing of our world as you rescue the poor and help the oppressed. Amen.

**Stu Sklamm** will now introduce us to today’s theme.

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME (Stu Sklamm)**

In today’s first reading, we learn that the Lord said to Moses and Aaron that anyone with a sore on their body that resembled leprosy must be declared unclean and isolated from the community. In today’s Gospel, such a leper approaches Jesus, kneels down and begs for healing, professing his faith that if Jesus wished to heal him, He could make him clean. In the second reading today, we are advised to do everything for the glory of God, seeking to please and benefit others as Christ would do.

It seems appropriate today, on St. Valentine’s Day, that the unifying theme in these passages is love. In the first reading, God’s loving concern for the health of the community and the love of one’s neighbor prompt protective rules, not unlike during our current pandemic. In the second reading, it is the love of God expressed through our treatment of all whom we encounter. In the Gospel, the leper’s faith in Jesus is rewarded with loving compassion and healing.

Thus, as we celebrate St. Valentine’s Day, we offer this prayer:

*I said a Valentine prayer for you*

*and asked the Lord above*

*to fill your heart and bless your soul*

*with the precious gift of love.*

*I asked Him for sincere love,*

*The kind that's meant to stay,*

*Just like the generous love*

*You give to those you touch each day.*

*I prayed for love from family*

*And from every cherished friend,*

*Then I asked the Lord to give you*

*His love that knows no end.* *(Slight pause)*

**Mia Brown** will now read from Leviticus, Chapter 13, Verses 1-2 and 44-46

**READING I Lv 13:1-2, 44-46 (Mia Brown)**

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,
“If someone has on one’s skin a scab or pustule or blotch
which appears to be the sore of leprosy,
the person shall be brought to Aaron, the priest,
or to one of the priests among his descendants.
If the person is leprous and unclean,
the priest shall declare the person unclean
by reason of the sore on the person’s head.

As long as the sore is on one, one shall declare to be unclean,
And shall dwell apart, making one’s abode outside the camp.”

**Sylvia Lynch** will nowread from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 10, verse 31-to Chapter 11 verse 1.

**READING 2** [**1 Cor 10:31—11:1**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/1corinthians/10?31) **(Sylvia Lynch)**

Brothers and sisters,
Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do everything for the glory of God.
Avoid giving offense, whether to the Jews or Greeks or
the church of God,
just as I try to please everyone in every way,
not seeking my own benefit but that of the many,
that they may be saved.
Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

 *( Slight pause)*

**Sylvia: Joan Sklamm** will now share a reflection on this reading.

**REFLECTION 1 (Joan Sklamm)**

**Salesian Reflection for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Today St. Paul tells us to “do everything for the glory of God.” St. Francis de Sales elaborates on this intention:

How do we “do all things in the name of God?”… First, we must purify all our intentions as far as we can. We must make a firm purpose to use the day well for the intention of giving glory to God and not us. Anticipate what tasks, transactions, and occasions for serving God you may meet today…. Carefully prepare yourself to avoid, resist, and overcome whatever might hinder you from authentically living Jesus, practicing humility, gentleness, patience, and simplicity….

…. Great opportunities to serve God rarely present themselves but little ones are frequent. As you carry out your responsibilities, all your activities, will be done in the name of God, who leads you to authentic wholeness through Jesus Christ.  (Adapted from the Writings of St. Francis de Sales.) **(Pause)**

**Kevin Lynch** will now offer questions for your reflection, after which we will pause for two minutes of silence.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Kevin Lynch)**

* What daily tasks might I transform by directing them to the glory of God?
* How might I affect a challenging relationship by practicing humility, gentleness, patience, and simplicity?

**SILENT REFLECTION** **(Betty:** Slide 2, time 2:00, chime, stop slide**)**

**Betty: Tim Brown** will now read from Mark’s Gospel, Chapter 1, verses 40-45.

### GOSPEL Mk 1:40-45 (Tim Brown)

A leper came to Jesus and, kneeling down, begged him and said,
“If you wish, you can make me clean.”
Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand,
touched him, and said to him,
“I do will it. Be made clean.”
The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean.
Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once.

He said to him, “See that you tell no one anything,
but go, show yourself to the priest
and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed;
that will be proof for them.”

The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter.
He spread the report abroad
so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly.
He remained outside in deserted places,
and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

 *( Slight pause)*

**Tim: Joan Sklamm** will now read a reflection for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time by Maria Ann McGuire of Catholic Women Preach.

**REFLECTION 2 (Joan Sklamm)**

In today’s Gospel, a leper who has been living separated from community, where he has been untouched, unseen, unheard comes before Jesus in desperation. ..Jesus sees the man, hears his plea, and reaches out to touch and heal him. Because of Jesus’ touch, the leper becomes a new man! He has found his voice and can now speak freely, be seen and re-enter the life of the community.…

The story of the leper makes me wonder how I would feel if I was made to live apart from the people I loved and from other people in the community….

In my work as a Hospice Chaplain, I see every day people who live alone and isolated, without the independence to move and interact with others freely. To the elderly, sick and dying, their situations can feel like leprosy where too often they are not heard--their discomfort, loneliness, and life stories can sometimes go ignored. They are not seen – many people live in facilities where few people come to visit them. They are not touched – so many of the elderly long for touch… The longing for touch is so strong.

… The homeless, mentally ill, divorced, immigrants, the unpopular, the poor, to name a few, all have felt the sadness of disconnection from community…..

Certainly during this pandemic that affects each of us, we are all feeling some sense of isolation. …. To different degrees, we are disconnected from the usual norms of society.

And beyond this, things can sometimes happen in our lives that make us feel lost. We feel hurt or angry and it can fester. We can feel distant from God and disconnected from people.

The invitation before us today is to open ourselves to God and recognize our need. Open ourselves to the one who sees us, hears us, and longs to touch and connect with us. And when this happens, it changes something inside us. God’s touch opens us to see with new eyes – to see and hear those around us who feel separated – those who long to be seen, heard and touched. When we see and hear the need of those around us, we take on the mind of Christ. And the mind of Christ says this, “I am yours and you are mine – imperfect, yes- but highly valued and beloved.

And so, I offer a prayer for you, for me, for all of us:

Loving God

I come before you in all my woundedness.

I bring you my pain,

My imperfections….

I open myself to your healing touch.

May your touch change me,

Inspire my voice.

Animate me to full participation.

Remind me of my worth.

Pour out your love through me so that I may take on the mind of Christ:

To love the leper back to health,

To remind them who they are: welcome, included, valued, necessary, Beloved Children of God.

Amen. [*Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time: Feb 14, 2021 (catholicwomenpreach.org)*](https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/02142021)

 **(Joan Sklamm)**

**Kevin Lynch** will now offer questions for reflection followed by two minutes of silence.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Kevin Lynch)**

* In our world today, who are the people that feel separated from the norms of life and acceptable society? Am I prepared to be a source of healing for their pain?
* What are the wounded places within me that keep me separated from God’s touch? Am I willing to bring what I need healed to God?

**SILENT REFLECTION** **(Betty:** Slide 2, time 2:00, chime, stop slide**)**

**Betty: Stu Sklamm** will now lead our sharing.

**SHARING TIME (Stu Sklamm)**

We invite you to briefly share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you have reflected upon our readings and music. We welcome everyone who wants to speak, and we also know that the wisdom of this community includes both words shared and silent listening,

So let’s begin in silence as we gather our reflections. [Long-ish pause]

Now who would like to start our sharing? Remember to unmute yourself to speak and mute yourself again afterwards.

[Sharing]

[If there is silence more than about 30 seconds before anyone speaks:] Take whatever quiet you need before you speak.

[If there is extended silence during the sharing:] Is there anyone else who would like to share?  [Pause.]

[Stop by about 11:20.]

Thank you.

Now **Sylvia Lynch** will lead us in prayer.

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY(Sylvia Lynch)**

Humbly mindful of God’s mercy, promises, and powerful, transforming love, now let us pray for ourselves, our brothers and sisters, and for the good of all the nations to whom Jesus has been revealed. Our response will be, **Loving God, hear our prayer.**

* That we may be respectful and compassionate toward those feel alone or isolated because of illness, physical handicaps or other causes and do all that we can to welcome and value them in our communities, let us pray, **Loving God, hear our prayer.**
* That the leaders of the many world religions, may learn from one another and find success in addressing the many challenges in our world, let us pray. **Loving God, hear our prayer.**
* For the good health, safety and well-being of families and those who have no family, let us pray.  **Loving God, hear our prayer.**
* That the leaders of our country, may put aside their partisan differences and pass legislation that will provide help to the citizens who desperately need assistance to feed their families, pay bills and survive the challenges facing them as a result of the pandemic, let us pray.  **Loving God hear our prayer.**
* That eligible citizens who want to receive a COVID vaccine, may be able to obtain it in a timely manner, let us pray.  **Loving God, hear our prayer.**
* That the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and their member organizations may successfully implement programs to address systemic racism and white privilege, guide their communities as they navigate new frontiers, and continue their service for the life of the world, let us pray.  **Loving God, hear our prayer.**

For what else shall we pray? Please unmute yourself to speak, and mute yourself afterwards.

(Shared prayers)

Loving God, we place all of our prayers, those spoken and those unspoken, into your loving care. We will do all that we can to put our prayers into action – while entrusting the outcome to you. Amen.

**OFFERTORY (Mia Brown)**

As Pope Francis has said, prayer isn't about closing oneself in a room with God "to put makeup on your soul — that's not prayer, that's fake praying; to pray is to face God and allow yourself to be sent by him to help a brother or sister. The proving ground for prayer is concrete love for one's neighbor.”

Let us now take time to name within ourselves something we will offer this week as coheirs and copartners in the promise of Christ through the Gospel. [Pause.]

In thanksgiving for the presence and power of Jesus Christ, and in unity with the Holy Spirit, let us pray. God of abundance, we commit to sharing our time, talents, and treasures with our neighbors so we may be a light and a witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION(Kevin Lynch)**

O Great Love, we are humbled and emboldened

to know that you trust us to be your body in this world.

We are part of that body as we let go of all that separates us from you,

and as we embrace one another and your entire creation with merciful love.

We give you thanks for your presence in us. [Pause.]

We remember the night before Jesus died.

At dinner with friends, Jesus knew all that would soon be asked of them,

and, loving them to the end, Jesus showed them how to care for each other

as they went out into the world.

First Jesus washed their feet.

Then he looked at what was in front of them, the bread and the cup,

gifts of the earth and work of human hands, and blessed them.

So let us, too, invite God right now into what is front and center in our lives

knowing that God will indeed enter what we offer – and bless it. [Pause.]

Let us invite God into ourselves so that we become God’s living presence. [Pause.]

Holy One, you transform us as you nourish us here.

May we nourish others with your presence. Amen.

**OUR FATHER (Tim Brown)**

Now let us join our hearts as if we could join our hands to pray in harmony with Christians throughout the world in the words that Jesus gave us:

***All (muted):*** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,

and do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil

for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING (Stu Sklamm)**

While we keep ourselves muted, let us reach out our hands and bless each other:

*O glorious advocate and protector, St. Valentine,*

*Look with pity upon our wants, hear our requests,*

*Attend to our prayers, relieve by your intercession*

*The miseries under which we labor,*

*and obtain for us the divine blessing*

*that we may be found worthy to join you in praising*

*the Almighty for all eternity:*

*through the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**All reply:** Amen

**CLOSING SONG –** **(Reggie Ott)**

**WE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

**Verse I**

Blessed are they who are poor in spirit,

Theirs is the kingdom of God,

Bless us, O Lord, make us poor in spirit;

Bless us, O Lord, our God.

**REFRAIN**

We are the light of the world,

May our light shine before all,

That they may see the good that we do,

and give glory to God,

**Verse I.**

Blessed those who hunger and thirst for justice,

They will be satisfied,

Bless us, O Lord, hear our cry for justice;

Bless us, O Lord, our God.

**REFRAIN**

**Verse V**

Blessed are they who show others mercy,

They will know mercy, too,

Bless us, O Lord, hear our cry for mercy;

Bless us, O Lord, our God.

**REFRAIN**

**Verse VI**

Blessed are hearts that are clean and holy,

They will behold the Lord,

Bless us, O Lord, make us pure and holy;

Bless us, O Lord, our God.

**REFRAIN**

**RESOURCES:**

Reading I, Reading II, and Gospel,[Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time | USCCB](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/021421.cfm)

MARIA ANNE MCGUIRE[Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time: Feb 14, 2021 (catholicwomenpreach.org)](https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/02142021)

Salesian Sunday Reflection, [Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 14, 2021 — Oblates of St. Francis de Sales](https://www.oblates.org/salesian-sunday-reflection-feed/sixth-sunday-in-ordinary-time-february-14-2021)

GATHER COMPREHENSIVE, 2ND Edition, Choir Edition, 2004, Chicago



**Maria Anne McGuire** is from Paso Robles, California. She graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo with a BS degree in Biology, and Loyola University, New Orleans with a Master’s Degree in Theology/Religious Education. She earned a Spiritual Direction Certificate from Mercy Center, Burlingame. She is trained in the Jesuit educational approach, valuing both the academic and spiritual aspects of faith issues. She works as a Chaplain with Hospice, recognizing the sacredness in every season of life. She has written articles in various formats, most recently in  the Women In Theology website. She previously taught Religion at St. Rose Catholic School. She has worked in various Church ministries over the years, most frequently in RCIA, Adult faith Formation, and collaborating with retreats and workshops. She has a keen interest in and love for writing. Her theological interests are multi-faceted. Much of her focus centers on the power of metaphor to address common human truths regardless of culture, faith perspective or gender. In particular, she contemplates Scripture with an eye towards Midrash: the stories and metaphor therein are the stories of each human being in every generation. She is interested in the dialogue and intersection between masculine and feminine perspectives on spirituality, believing both contribute to a balanced faith vision. She is attentive to those who experience marginalization in society and is interested in what lies at the threshold of liminality.