**Solidarity with Sisters Communal Prayer for Sunday, OCTOBER 24, 2021, 30TH SUNDAY in ordinary time**

**“*JESUS, I WANT TO SEE*”**

A painting of a group of people

Description automatically generated with low confidence

**Eustache Le Sueur, Christ Healing the Blind Man**

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eustache_Le_Sueur_003.jpg>

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

**WELCOME (Betty Thompson)**

Welcome, everyone!

* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* Thanks to Richard McGinnis who prepared this communal prayer.
* Thanks to Linda Donaldson for our music.
* And, thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today: Ann Jelen, Sr. Grace Hartzog, Bob Gallagher, George Fulk, Charlotte Cook, Gail DeGeorge, Kate Monagan, Mary Ott, Mia Brown, Tim Brown, Dan McCarthy, and Karen McCarthy.
* If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please get in touch.

**SETTLING IN (Richard McGinnis)**

To be with God and each other, we need to first be with ourselves. Let your breath slow and deepen and carry ease into your body and your mind. We pray:

May I quiet my words and listen….

May I calm my thoughts and be….

May I soften my heart and open….

May I still my soul and receive….

*(Pause)*

**(Richard) Our Opening Song is “Open My Eyes” by Jesse Manibusan.**

**OPENING SONG: “Open My Eyes” by Jesse Manibusan (Betty plays YouTube at 1.5 speed, stop @ 2:31) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo6gZAUuQ3E**

Open my eyes, Lord,  
Help me to see your face  
Open my eyes, Lord,  
Help me to see.

Open my ears, Lord,  
Help me to hear your voice.  
Open my ears, Lord,  
Help me to hear.

Open my heart, Lord.  
Help me to love like you/  
Open my heart, Lord.  
Help me to love.

And the first shall be last,  
And our eyes are opened,  
And we'll hear like never before,  
And we'll speak in new ways,  
And we'll see God's face

In places we've never known.

I live within you,  
Deep in your heart, O Love.  
I live within you.  
Rest now in me.

**GREETING (Ann Jelen)**

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**All:** Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Ann Jelen)**

Jesus is the light that guides us in the darkness.

To live in the light, we are called to deepen our faith so that we rise above the personal difficulties and the troubles of our time in order to be instruments of God’s mercy to one another.

Amen.

**GATHERING PRAYER (Sr. Grace Hartzog)**

As we gather together to listen to the readings, let us open ourselves to the light of God’s grace and consider the following blessing, which is a reminder of who each one of us is and who we are as a people—we are Beloved of God.

“Beloved of God”

If you would enter  
into the wilderness,  
do not begin  
without a blessing.

Do not leave  
without hearing  
who you are:  
Beloved,  
named by the One  
who has traveled this path  
before you.

Do not go  
without letting it echo  
in your ears,  
and if you find  
it is hard  
to let it into your heart,  
do not despair.  
That is what  
this journey is for.

I cannot promise  
this blessing will free you  
from danger,  
from fear,  
from hunger  
or thirst,  
from the scorching  
of sun  
or the fall  
of the night.

I can tell you  
that on this way  
there will be rest.

I can tell you  
that you will know  
the strange graces  
that come to our aid  
only on a road  
such as this,  
that fly to meet us  
bearing comfort  
and strength,  
that come alongside us  
for no other cause  
than to lean themselves  
toward our ear  
and with their  
curious insistence  
whisper our name:

Beloved.  
Beloved.  
Beloved.

(Jan Richardson, “Beloved of God” from [Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons](https://janrichardson.com/bookcircleofgrace) )

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME (Richard McGinnis)**

If you are like me, you pray that catastrophe passes you by, or, if it does occur, that the weight of it be lifted. But catastrophes happen. They have many faces, and they happen to us. How do we know God in those moments? Today, we explore faithful prayer in adversity and God’s liberating response.

In Jeremiah, we encounter a people who have been defeated in battle by the Babylonians and led captive into exile. Only a remnant of the people remains. In Mark, we meet a beggar held captive by the society’s deeply harmful belief that blindness was God’s punishment for personal sin. Both Israel and Bartimaeus ask God for help.

Jeremiah reveals a God of power and consolation who will guide a defeated, but faithful, people onto a level path. Mark shows us the immediate action of Jesus to grant the ability to see clearly to a vulnerable person with the courage to ask in faith for mercy. These Scriptural readings underscore the gift that has been given to us by God to survive and to prevail in the face of overwhelming difficulty, and they invite us to open our hearts to a deeper understanding and an embrace of the miraculous gift of faith. For a people of faith, God provides liberation from the chains of catastrophe and gives what is needed to become a source of divine mercy.

*(Slight pause)*

**(Richard) George Fulk will read from the Book of Jeremiah and Bob Gallagher will offer questions for you to consider in silence. Feel free to stay with whatever question or portion of the readings calls to you.**

**READING 1 JER**  [**31:7-9**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/jeremiah/31?7) **(George Fulk)**

Thus says Yahweh:

Shout with joy for   
 I have delivered the people,  
        the remnant of Israel.   
    Behold, I will bring them back  
            I will gather them from the ends of the world,  
        with the blind and the lame in their midst,  
    the mothers and those with child;  
        they shall return as an immense throng.  
    They departed in tears,  
        but I will console them and guide them;  
    I will lead them to brooks of water,  
        on a level road, so that none shall stumble.  
    For I am a mother and father to Israel,…

**QUESTIONS 1 (Bob Gallagher)** *(Pause after each question.)*

### How has God consoled you in a troubled time?

### Agonized by circumstance, when have you been astonished by a blessed outcome?

**COMMUNAL SILENCE**     **(Betty:** Share slide 1, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

**(Richard) Charlotte Cook will read from the Gospel of Mark.**

**READING 2** [**MK 10:46-52**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/mark/10?46) **(Charlotte Cook)**

As Jesus was leaving Jericho with the disciples and a sizable crowd,  
Bartimaeus, who was blind,   
sat by the roadside begging.  
On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth,  
Bartimaeus began to cry out and say,  
"Jesus, son of David, have pity on me."  
And many scolded him, saying to be silent.   
But Bartimaeus kept calling out all the more,  
"Son of David, have pity on me."  
Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."  
So they called the blind person, saying,  
"Don’t be afraid; get up, Jesus is calling you."  
Bartimaeus threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus.   
Jesus asked, "What do you want me to do for you?"

Bartimaeus replied, "Rabboni, I want to see."   
Jesus said, "Go your way; your faith has saved you."   
Immediately he received sight  
and followed Jesus on the way.

**QUESTIONS 2 (Bob Gallagher)** *(Pause after each question.)*

How do you bring your deep longings to God? How does it feel to persist like Bartimaeus?

What can you now see, to which you had been blind?

**COMMUNAL SILENCE** **(Betty:** Share slide 2, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

*(Slight pause)*

**(Richard) Gail DeGeorge will read an excerpt from a reflection by Sister Mary M. McGlone, CSJ, on today’s readings.**

**READING 3 (Gail DeGeorge)**

Last year I took a minibus to a center for people with disabilities in Ecuador. Sitting next to me was Letitia, a worn 60-year-old woman who was propping up her severely disabled 7-year-old grandson, Jimmy. As we chatted, she talked of how grateful she was that while the boy received therapy, a special education teacher was teaching **her** to read and write. ….

She admitted that it was very hard. .., but she explained that once she got a secondhand pair of reading glasses, the task seemed possible and she could already sign her own name. She ended her story with her standard refrain, “Gracias a Dios.”

I was overwhelmed by her combination of courage and humility,…

Letitia is like many people God sends to tutor the affluent. A bit like Bartimaeus, she believes God will give her the help she needs in spite of the odds.

Bartimaeus calls out: “Jesus, have pity on me. ” A plea for God’s mercy, for the grace that gives us what we need to be faithful disciples. Then when Jesus called to Bartimaeus and asked what he wanted, Bartimaeus responded without hesitation, “I want to see.”

Mark wove this story to make an artful contrast between the disciples and Bartimaeus. For weeks Jesus had been trying to prepare his disciples for all that was to come, but they refused to see his point. Bartimaeus wanted precisely what the disciples were avoiding: to see things clearly. This was the request Jesus longed to grant, but only to someone who had the faith and courage to ask for it.

We don’t know how Bartimaeus explained his new vocation to the disciples. Perhaps he said that having experienced Jesus’ mercy, he now wanted to see all of life from Jesus’ perspective.

Perhaps today Bartimaeus would tell us what Pope Francis has said -- that the courage to ask for clear vision lets us “stop looking for those personal or communal niches which shelter us from ... human misfortune and ... enter into the reality of other people’s lives.”

People like Letitia and Bartimaeus are all around us. If we put on God’s eyes, we learn from them that our vocation is all about relying on and becoming sources of God’s mercy.

**QUESTIONS 3 (Bob Gallagher)** *(Pause after each question.)*

### In a difficult period, what has broken through the darkness to give you great joy?

### How do you live in solidarity with people like Letitia and Bartimaeus? What do you “see” in those encounters?

**COMMUNAL SILENCE**  **(Betty:** Share slide 3, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

**(Richard). Kate Monahan will lead our sharing following an excerpt from a recording of “Let It Be” by the Beatles.**

**(Betty: Play audio of “Let It Be” from YouTube while showing Slide 4; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDYfEBY9NM4;**

**stop at 1:51)**

**SHARING (Kate Monaghan)**

We invite you to briefly share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you listened and as you reflected on these readings. That helps us to glimpse the many ways God is among us. We welcome new voices, and we also know that the wisdom of this community includes both words shared and silent listening. And let’s leave a bridge of silence between speakers.

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

Please unmute yourself to speak, and mute again afterwards.

Who would like to begin our sharing?

(Sharing)

(Let sharing continue for about 20 minutes. Aim to end no later than 11:20.)

Thank you for your insights and thoughts.  We have to stop now, but we can continue after the final song, as we often do. Now let us pray.

**(Richard) Mary Ott will lead us in prayer.**

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY (Mary Ott)**

We know that God alone is enough for us. At the same time, we have heard Paul say that “if there is anything you need, pray for it.” So now we bring what is in our hearts to God. Our response will be: “God of Mercy, hear our prayer.”

Giver of consolation and of hope, heal the blindness that lives within each of us and within our church and open our eyes so that we may live each day in the light of your love. For this we pray. All: God of Mercy, hear our prayer.

Spirit of Mercy, we ask your blessing upon Catholic sisters as they live in faithful discipleship with vision and hope. For this we pray. All: God of Mercy, hear our prayer.

Now let’s remember the feelings and prayers that arose in us as we shared reflections, and also the prayers we carry with us. *[Pause.]*

Now, for what else shall we pray? Please remember to unmute and mute yourself.

(People speak.) ……For this we pray. All: God of Mercy, hear our prayer.

Thank you.

O God, we turn to you with all our prayers, spoken and unspoken. We will do all that we can to put our prayers into action – wh~~i~~le entrusting the outcome to you. Amen.

**OFFERTORY (Mia Brown)**

We celebrate the amazing fact that the Spirit of God lives in us now and at every moment. What does it mean to offer yourself to God in gratitude? Is there an old or new call that you will commit to this week? *[Pause.]*

Let us pray. Generous God, Creative Spirit, we commit to sharing our time, talents, and treasures so that we may be a light and a witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Tim Brown)**

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 and among 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

and said, “… as I have done for you, you should also do.”

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 in our world. [Pause.]

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

May we nourish others with your presence.

Amen.

**OUR FATHER, OUR MOTHER (Dan McCarthy)**

Now let us join our hearts in the words of the Polynesian and Maori people and the New Zealand Anglican community:

Eternal Spirit,  
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
Source of all that is and that shall be,  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;  
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world;  
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom  
sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trial too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,  
now and forever. Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING (Karen McCarthy)**

Let us extend our hands and bless each other:

(From Col: 3:12-17)

Put on, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved,  
heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience,  
bearing with one another and forgiving one another.  
And over all these put on love,   
that is, the bond of perfection.  
And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,   
the peace into which you were also called in one body.  
And be thankful.  
Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

(Inspired by Dolly Parton’s America” podcast, “She’s Alive”.)

Love yourself as God loves you.

Be at peace.

Go and do good.

**CLOSING SONG:** **“Christ, Be Our Light” (Linda Donaldson)**

Verse 1

Longing for light, we wait in darkness,

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people, Refrain

Light for the world to see. *Christ, be our light!*

*Shine in our hearts.*

*Shine in the darkness.*

*Christ be our light!*

*Shine in your church gathered today.*

Verse 3

Longing for food, many are hungry.

Longing for water, many still thirst.

Make us your bread, broken for others,

Shared until all are fed. Refrain

Verse 5

Many the gifts, many the people,

many the hearts that yearn to belong.

Let us be servants to one another,

Making your kingdom come. Refrain

**RESOURCES**

Scripture. Excerpted and adapted from https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/102421.cfm

### Reflection. Adapted from Mary M. McGlone, CSJ, “The Mercy God Longs to Give,” Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, October 28, 2018, from National Catholic Reporter. https://www.ncronline.org/news/spirituality/scripture-life/thirtieth-sunday-ordinary-time-1

### Settling In. Adapted from Prayer by Mary Davis

Gathering Prayer. “Beloved of God” from [Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons](https://janrichardson.com/bookcircleofgrace) by Jan Richardson. http://paintedprayerbook.com/category/blessings/

Art. Eustache Le Sueur, Christ Healing the Blind Man

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eustache_Le_Sueur_003.jpg>

Music:

The Beatles, “Let It Be (Remastered 2009)”.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDYfEBY9NM4

Opening Song. “[Open My Eyes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rj-jJM7ODIY)” Artist: Jesse Manibusan – Album: Never Too Young – By Request Licensed to YouTube by The Orchard Music (on behalf of spiritandsong.com). Hexacorp (music publishing), Adorando Brazil, Capitol CMG Publishing, and 9 Music Rights Societies. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo6gZAUuQ3E

Closing Song. “Christ Be Our Light.” Selection from Glory to God, The Presbyterian Hymnal, Westminster John Knox Press (First Ed. 2013), #314.

Final Blessing. Inspired in part by: Dolly Parton’s America podcast, “She’s Alive,” December 31, 2019. https://www.npr.org/podcasts/765024913/dolly-parton-s-america