**Solidarity with Sisters’ Communal Prayer for Sun., Jan. 9, 2022**

**Baptism of the Lord**

*Celebrate a new beginning ... a gift of grace … a call to holiness.*

**HELLOs** and then Betty mutes everyone. **Suzie DeQuattro**

**WELCOME  Betty Thompson**

Welcome, everyone!

* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* Thanks to Kathy and Lin Linabery, Deb Ballard, and Norb Bufka, who prepared this communal prayer.
* Thanks to Linda Donaldson  for our music.
* Thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today: Judy Sholes, Maryann Dolan, Sister Jo’Ann De Quattro, Sister Marie McCarthy, Kathy Cavanaugh, Bill Cavanaugh, Peggy Thompson, Lynn Bufka, Richard McGinnis, and Sister Jennie Lechtenberg.
* If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please get in touch.

**SETTLING IN Betty Thompson**

Let your breath bring you into quiet so you can be attentive to each other and to the Spirit.  Notice your breath as it goes in and out…. Let it slow and deepen… and slowly fill you with the peace of Christ. We begin with 3 deep breaths.  One to be here… one to be together…  and one to know the Spirit who never leaves us.

Now Linda Donaldson will lead us into our celebration.

**OPENING  SONG                         Linda Donaldson**

**“Come to the Water” - Composer: John B. Foley, SJ**

O let all who thirst, let them come to the water.

And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord.

Without money, without price.

Why should you pay the price, except for the Lord?

And let all who seek, let them come to the water.

And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord.

Without money, without strife.

Why should you spend your life, except for the Lord?

And let all who toil, let them come to the water.

And let all who are weary, let them come to the Lord.

All who labor, without rest,

How can your soul find rest, except for the Lord?

And let all the poor, let them come to the water.

Bring the ones who are laden, bring them all to the Lord.

Bring the children without might.

Easy the load and light: come to the Lord.

**GREETING  Judy Sholes**

Beloved Community, rejoice!Emmanuel is alive in us!  Alleluia!  Alleluia!

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

**CALL TO WORSHIP  Judy Sholes**

St. Paul wrote in his First Letter to the Corinthians: “For we were

all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body - whether Jew or

Gentile, slave or free - we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”

As we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus and remember our own

baptisms, help us drink in the Spirit today in fuller measure so as

to participate in the Lord’s life and mission.

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME  Richard McGinnis**

Today’s gospel opens with John baptizing many people, including Jesus.  Though Jesus’ baptism appears to be like everyone else’s, it led to something completely different.

We see Jesus praying.  The Holy Spirit comes upon Jesus.  A voice from heaven identifies Jesus as “my beloved Son”.

Fr. Richard Rohr describes the powerful nature of being named a beloved child of God.  Jesus had to hear it with his own ears and found his own soul, his own identity, and his own life’s purpose!  Baptism marked a new period in his life.

Like Jesus at the Jordan, each of us is formed and called by God; each of us is empowered with the presence of the Spirit, and each of us is a beloved child of God on whom God’s favor rests.

Now  Peggy Thompson will read from Luke’s gospel, Chapter 3 verses 21-22 followed by questions and silence for reflection.  Feel free to stay with whatever question calls you.

**READING 1 Luke 3:21-22 Peggy Thompson**

After all the people had been baptized

and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying,

heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit

descended upon him

in bodily form like a dove.

And a voice came from heaven,

“You are my beloved Son,

with you I am well pleased.”

 **REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS Sr. Jo’Ann De Quattro**

Whether you were baptized as an infant or as an adult, do you think of it as a

singular event or as an evolving awareness of yourself as a beloved child of God?

How has your understanding or experience of baptism evolved through the years?

Reflect on what it means for you to say “ I am a beloved daughter or  son of God.”

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

**Betty**:  Now Deb Ballard will read.

**READING 2 Deb Ballard**

Baptism is one of the most awesome gifts the human heart could ever receive: God’s beautiful and magnificent gift.  We call it grace …. always with us.

God partners with us in our baptism.  Our commitment is a promise we make to ourselves, others and God to be faithful.  Our life’s work is to awaken to God’s presence, and  to reflect God’s faithfulness  with love, compassion, and forgiveness.

Our baptism story is one of call and journey. Wherever we find ourselves on this journey in 2022, we all have a need to have someone believe in us, take delight in us, and communicate to us that we are a beloved, eternally existing child of God.  Then our mission is to replicate and resound God’s message.  Integrating this is a lifelong process.

*(Slight pause)*

**REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS 2 Sr. Jo’Ann DeQuattro**

The deepest questions are:

How am I being faithful to the person God wants me to be?

How am I growing in my ability to offer unconditional love and kindness to all people - including myself?”

How do I let God partner with me as my baptism unfolds throughout my life?

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

 **Betty:** SisterMarie McCarthy  will now read.

**READING 3 Reader # 1: Sr. Marie McCarthy**

Baptism is our true identity.

At a time when legal papers have become so important for determining status, we can claim our baptismal certificate as our principal identity card.  It tells us to whom we belong and to what we are called.

When we are aware of our baptismal identity, we draw from it as a well that gives strength to the struggles and challenges and gives courage to be faithful in times of stress and grief.

Baptism connects us to one another, offering a community to accompany and inspire us.

Today’s remembrance of baptism as a grace  offers us the opportunity to silently renew  some of the promises that each of us made and to which we are to be committed through our lives:

Do you reject evil and sin and accept to be taught by God’s grace?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

Do you reject pride, arrogance and self-sufficiency and humbly accept to depend on God as the source of your life and strength?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

Do you reject materialism and a preoccupation with acquiring the goods of the Earth and freely choose to make God the basis of your security and so share what you have with people who do not have what they need?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

Do you reject poverty and homelessness and accept responsibility for the well-being of people who are less fortunate than you?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

**SUNG ANTIPHON: Linda Donaldson**

We have put on Christ, in Christ we have been baptized.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

**READING 3 cont’d Reader #2:     Kathy Cavanaugh**

Do you reject injustice in all its forms, moral, social, economic, and political and pledge to become a part of the solution to this world’s inequities within the parameters of your own family, your own neighborhood, your own community?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

Do you reject apathy and indifference, and accept that you are  your brother and sister’s  keeper?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

Do you renounce self-importance and an ambitious struggle for power over others so as to accept the Christian’s role of servant of all?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

Do you reject the consumerist culture that is destroying our planet and

accept responsibility for reusing, restoring, and recycling items?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

Do you share your point of view with humility and listen openly to those who disagree?

*[Pause 5 seconds.]*

**SUNG ANTIPHON: Linda Donaldson**

We have put on Christ, in Christ we have been baptized.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

**REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS 3 Sr. Jo’Ann DeQuattro**

Do you freely and willingly renew your baptismal commitment and do you promise to live each day with the gift of God’s grace that teaches you?

What is your free and willing baptismal commitment today?  How do you “put on Christ”?

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

**SUNG ANTIPHON at the end of silence        Linda Donaldson**

We have put on Christ, in Christ we have been baptized.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

**Betty :**  Lynn Bufka will now lead our sharing.

**SHARING  Lynn Bufka**

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 breath of silence between speakers which allows us to take in more fully what was just said.

We begin in silence as we gather our reflections.  *[Long pause.]*

Please unmute yourself to speak, and mute again afterwards.  Who would like to begin?

(Sharing)

*[Let sharing continue for about 20 minutes ending by 11:20.]*

Thank you.  We have to stop now, and we can continue after the final song, as we often do.

Now Kathy Linabery will lead us in prayer.

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY Kathy Linabery**

We end our Christmas season by celebrating our rebirth in baptism and bring to God what is in our hearts.  Our response will be: Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

Our baptism invites us to share the best part of ourselves.  Help us during this new year to mirror Jesus in our thoughts, desires, words, and actions.

For this we pray: Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

God among us, animate the Leadership Conference of Women Religious as they ask not simply what they are to do for your kingdom, but how they are to be your love.  For this we pray: Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

For all who care with tenderness for the sick and dying;

who allow compassion to replace indifference;

who reach out to those who struggle to believe in their own goodness;

who serve us in ways we overlook.

For this we pray: Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

That the leaders of our country will act and speak in ways that unite and not divide our country.

For this we pray: Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

May the example of Jesus, and the call of our baptism

fill us with enthusiasm for life each day.

As we remember that You are the Living Water

who quenches our thirst and gives us zest for living

With grateful hearts, we pray: Spirit of Love, 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.)

Thank you.

O God, we give you all our prayers, spoken and unspoken.  We will do all that we can to put our prayers into action – while entrusting the outcome to you.  Amen.

**OFFERTORY Bill Cavanaugh**

In these weeks after Christmas, we celebrate the amazing fact that the Holy One is with us and lives in us now and at every moment.  We offer ourselves to God in gratitude for having been chosen, just as we are, to be God’s Living Sign in our world. What special call will I live out during the coming 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  Sr. Jennie Lechtenberg**

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 wine,

gifts of Earth and the 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.]*

Holy One, make us your bread of abundance.  Make us your wine of joy.

Let even our fragments be plenty to share.

Amen.

**Jennie:**  Now Norb Bufka will lead us in the Our Father, Our Mother.

**OUR FATHER, OUR MOTHER         Norb Bufka**

Now let us join our hearts as if we could join our hands to pray in harmony with all beloved by God in the words that Jesus gave us:

***All (muted):*** Our Father, Our Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be your 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 Maryann Dolan**

In the name of the One who came as servant,

we ask for compassion.

In the name of the poor from whom we must learn,

we ask for humility.

In the name of oppressed people, who have suffered too long,

we ask for a sense of urgency.

In the name of the Spirit who calls us,

we ask for integrity.

Finally, in our own name and in our need, we pray

Bless us with all that we need to serve you in truth and to go forth in peace.

Amen.

**CLOSING SONG - Flow River Flow - Composer: Bob Hurd**

 **(We listen,)**

**Betty: Show slide 4 with**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36fqt-5fDVo&ab_channel=BobHurd-Topic>

 (The youtube sound fades after female solo and closing.)

Flow river flow, flow over me.

O living water, poured out for free.

O living water, flow over me.

Whoever drinks the water I will give,

Will never thirst again.

The drink I give is an everlasting river,

Welling up within you to give eternal life.

Flow river flow, flow over me.

O living water, poured out for free.

O living water, flow over me.

**RESOURCES**

The Sanchez Archives

Baptism of the Lord

Year C

NCR

Mary M. McGlone CSJ

Dec 2021, Jan 2022

Richard Rohr homily

Jan 11, 2015

“You Must Start with Something Positive”

Sr. Theresa Byrne, O.P.