

## **SOLIDARITY WITH SISTERS' TRINITY SUNDAY SERVICE – JUNE 7, 2020**

**“The superlative quality of the God we encounter through Scripture is love.”**

*Mary M. McGlone, June 7, 2020: The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, April 20, 2020*

### **TECHNICAL CHECK-IN (Betty)**

I'm Betty Thompson and I welcome you here on behalf of Solidarity with Sisters.

- We sent the files of readings, responses, and lyrics.
- Zoom: turn on cameras - Gallery view option.
- Mute: know how? On phone? On Zoom? Needed even during singing.

Now let's put technical things aside.

### **WELCOME (Betty)**

Welcome, everyone!

- Introductions – people who haven't been here before?
- The liturgy for today was prepared by Stu and Joan Sklamm.
- Thanks to Stu Sklamm and Reggie Ott, who will lead us in music.
- Thanks to readers today – Sylvia and Kevin Lynch. If you'd like to read in future Sundays or prepare a future Sunday liturgy, just get in touch.

### **SETTLING IN (Betty)**

Let's get settled as we prepare to begin. Settle into a comfortable position. Notice your breath as it goes in and out. Become aware of Divine Presence in you as inhale, and tensions leaving as you exhale. And now let's take 3 deep breaths. One to be here... one to be together....and one to create space for God alive among us!

Now Stu Sklamm will lead us into our celebration.

### **OPENING –HOLY, HOLY, HOLY! LORD GOD ALMIGHTY (Stu)**

*Because of Zoom limitations, please mute yourself if you wish to join in singing along.*

*[Verse 1]*

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning, our song shall rise to thee:

Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty,

God in three persons, Blessed Trinity.

*[Verse 2]*

Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore thee,  
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,  
God everlasting, through eternity.

*[Verse 4]*

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All thy works shall praise thy Name in earth, and sky, and sea.  
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty,  
God in three persons, Blessed Trinity.

### **GREETING (Betty)**

Let us rejoice, for Jesus Christ is alive among us and the grace of the Holy Spirit energizes us!  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

**All:** And all God's people reply: Alleluia! Alleluia!

### **CALL TO WORSHIP (Betty)**

We come together today on Trinity Sunday because it is with each other that we experience the Blessed Trinity ourselves as people in a loving relationship with God and in loving relationship with one another as the body of Christ. We gather to remember that God is in love with us. Jesus told us that wherever two or three are gathered in his name, he is right here in the midst of us. We pray that in this strange and often difficult time, our time together this morning will be radiant with the light of Christ and the love of the Holy Spirit.

### **GATHERING PRAYER (Suzie)**

O God who creates and who gives breath,  
be with us now as we come to you  
with the great longings of our world  
and of our selves.  
We come together  
trusting that the Spirit will be at work in us  
as breath that gives us life  
and as fire that impels us.  
Help us to let go and to let come.  
Help us to live the questions  
and to move with you, in you, and toward you,  
ever open to what is waiting to be born in us.  
Amen.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THEME (Joan)**

Today we focus on the eternal loving relationship among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit shared with all humanity open to God's message and love. Richard Rohr in his meditation, "The Foundation of Community," says, "A divine foundation of relationship is what all religion, spirituality, and perhaps even politics, is aiming for.... The way of Jesus therefore is an invitation to a way of living, loving, and relating—on earth as it is in God. We are intrinsically like the Trinity, living in absolute relatedness. While we may not always recognize it, we are all together in a web of mutual interdependence. When we recognize it on a spiritual level, we call it *love*."

*Reflection: Please consider the relationships from which you receive love and those to whom you give love.*

[Pause.]

**(Suzie)** After each of today's readings, we will offer a question before we pause for silent reflection. Sylvia will now read from the Book of Exodus<sup>1</sup> and Kevin will offer a reflection question.

## **A READING FROM THE 34th CHAPTER OF EXODUS, Verses 4b-6, 8-9 (Sylvia)**

Moses then cut two stone tablets like the former, and early the next morning he went up Mount Sinai as the Lord had commanded him, taking along the two stone tablets. Having come down in a cloud, the Lord stood with him there and proclaimed his name, "LORD." Thus the Lord passed before him and cried out, "The LORD, the LORD, a merciful and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity,..."

"Moses at once bowed down to the ground in worship. Then he said, "If I find favor with you, O LORD, do come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins, and receive us as your own."

## **REFLECTION : (Kevin)**

"The word for mercy derives from the same word as womb and refers to an almost instinctive response of protective care...such as a mother for her child.... "God's graciousness can be understood as God's favor...loving-kindness implies interaction and involvement to bring about the good of the beloved."

*Please consider: In what ways have you experienced God's favor in your life?*

**SILENCE** (Sound a chime after 1:30 minutes.) **(Betty)**

**Suzie:** Kevin will now read from Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians.

**A READING FROM THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS, CHAPTER 13, Verses 11-13 (Kevin)**

And now, brothers, I must say good-bye. Mend your ways. Encourage one another. Live in harmony and peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the holy ones send greetings to you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

**REFLECTION (Sylvia)**

"'Mend your ways' can be translated as 'aim for perfection' and reminds us that the community has all the gifts it needs if only it would orient them to their proper use."

*Please consider: How might our community use its gifts to aim for perfection in our current crises?*

**SILENCE (Sound a chime after 1:30) (Betty)**

**Suzie:** Sylvia will now read from the Gospel according to John.

**A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, CHAPTER 3, Verses 16-18 (Sylvia)**

Yes, God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him may not die but may have eternal life.

God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him avoids condemnation, but whoever does not believe is already condemned for not believing in the name of God's only Son.

**REFLECTION (Kevin)**

"In contrast to the depiction of a god of wrath" that we just heard in the last sentence of the Gospel, "the African-American poet, James Weldon Johnson, describes God in his poem, "The Creation," saying, "This great God, like a mammy bending over her baby, kneeled down in the dust, toiling over a lump of clay...Then into it he blew the breath of life."<sup>ii</sup>

*Considering this distinctly different perspective on today's Gospel, how might it affect your perception of God?*

**SILENCE** (Sound a chime after 1:30 minutes.) **(Betty)**

**Suzie:** Joan will now read the Reflection:

**REFLECTION : We continue with Richard Rohr’s Meditation, “THE FOUNDATION OF COMMUNITY” (Joan)**

The 12<sup>th</sup>-century mystic Richard of St. Victor (1123-1173) wrote about the Trinity as a mutual, loving companionship of friends—a community, if you will. In Rohr’s book, *The Divine Dance*, he summarized some of his thinking: For God to be good, God can be one. For God to be loving, God has to be two, because love is always a relationship. But for God to share “excellent joy” and “delight,” God has to be three, because supreme happiness is when two persons share their common delight in a third something—together. All we need to do is witness a couple after the birth of their new baby, and we know this is true.

The people I have loved with great abandon and freedom were not just the people who loved me, but people who loved what I loved. People who cared about community, the Gospel, the poor, justice, honesty—this is where the flow was easy, natural, and life-giving. Two people excited about the same thing are the beginning of almost everything new, creative, and risky in our world. Surely this is what Jesus meant by his first and most basic definition of church as “two or three gathered.” (*Matthew 18:20*)

A community inspired by the Trinity will be a community of people who treat each other as subjects and not objects. Just as the persons of the Trinity know and love one another, from God’s side we are always known as loved *subject to subject*. God and the human person must know one another center to center, subject to subject, and never subject to object. This is why there is no seeking of power *over* in the Trinity, but only *power with*—a giving away, a sharing, a letting go, and thus an infinity of trust and mutuality. This has the power to change all relationships: in marriage, in culture, and even in international relations.

If we believe in a Trinitarian God, then we must hold fast to the truth that God is community—a completely loving, mutually self-giving, endlessly generative relationship between equal partners. We are included in that community and so is everyone else! A Trinitarian image of God should have changed our politics, our gender relationships, all power differentials, and friendship itself. But most of Christian history was never practically Trinitarian.

*Please consider: What word or phrase in this reflection resonates with or challenges me? What is mine to do?*

**SILENCE** (Sound a chime after 1:30 minutes.) **(Suzie)**

## **SHARING (Suzie)**

I invite you to share your reflections. Everyone's individual reflections help us to glimpse the many ways God is among us.

If you would like to speak, you will need to unmute yourself on your phone or in Zoom. After you speak, please mute yourself again. If more than one person speaks at once, one will go first and the other will speak after that.

Who would like to begin our sharing?

## **(Sharing)**

Thank you. (If the leader of this part can come up with two or three words on the spot to express the essence you, mention that. No pressure to do that.)

Now Stu will lead us in prayer.

## **INTENTIONS (Stu)**

O Great Love, 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 community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world.

-- For the wisdom and courage to contribute to peace in our communities and throughout the world...we pray. *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For those who have never experienced God's love in their lives, we pray.....*Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For those who struggle to show love to others, especially to those who are different or difficult, we pray *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For the commitment to show love toward those who do not yet know Christ, we pray *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For all families; for broken families; and for children and adults who have no families, we pray. *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For families struggling with child care during this pandemic and especially this summer, we pray. *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For our divided nation: that we may learn how to be a cohesive community, we pray. *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For our efforts to care for those in need, and for our parish priests and ministers who need our loving support, we pray. *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For the sick, the dying and the grieving among us, we pray. *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For victims of police violence and their grieving families and friends, we pray.... *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

-- For the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and their member communities, we pray. *Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.*

Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God.<sup>iii</sup>

### **(Suzie)**

Now, for what else shall we pray? Please unmute yourself as you speak. Please end your petition with "For this we pray." (All: Blessed Trinity, hear our prayer.)

(People speak.)

Thank you.

Holy Spirit, we place all of our prayers, those spoken and those unspoken, into your loving care, and we entrust the outcome to you. As we do, we use the words of Sister Pat Farrell, "There is so much more going on within and around us than we will ever be able to perceive. The unseen movement of love is creatively holding everything together in ways infinitely beyond what we could ask or imagine." We ask You Spirit to "open space in us to flow with what we cannot see, with what is beyond us. Yet the path remains always a walk in the dark. We walk it together, summoning one another to deepening faith in the invisible energy of Love that surrounds and carries us."

### **CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Betty)**

Holy One, your future is eager to be born in us.

We offer ourselves to you for this work.

You nourish us for this work as we break bread together.

And so we remember the night before Jesus died.

The first thing Jesus did was to give thanks.

So let us know that God is among us  
and give thanks. [Pause.]

And then Jesus, who was having dinner with his friends,

looked at what was in front of him, the bread and the cup,  
and he blessed them.

So let us, too, invite God right now  
into what is front and center in our lives  
and know that God will indeed enter what we offer – and bless it. [Pause.]

We thank you, O God, for your blessings.  
Amen.

### **OUR FATHER (Suzie)**

Now let us pray in harmony with all Christians throughout the world in the words that  
Jesus gave us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy 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 lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil  
for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

### **FINAL BLESSING FOR TRINITY SUNDAY (Suzie)**

Go in peace knowing that “we are deeply loved and encountered by a God who is with  
us and is shown to us in many ways and through many faces, and we are never alone.  
We are called to live with this generous reality and to share it with one another.”<sup>iv</sup>

Now, as we end, let’s bless each other. Please mute yourself but speak aloud. And we  
know that our care for each other and our prayers for each other are not mute at all.

**All:** May the Lord bless us and keep us.  
May the Lord shine his light upon us.  
May the Lord be gracious to us  
and give us peace. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG: O GOD, ALMIGHTY FATHER (Reggie)**

*Because of Zoom limitations, please mute yourself if you wish to join in singing along.*

*[Verse 1]*

O God, Almighty Father, Creator of all things,  
The heavens stand in wonder, While earth your glory sings.

*[Chorus]*

O most holy Trinity, Undivided unity,  
Holy God, mighty God, God immortal be adored!

*[Verse 2]*

O Jesus Word incarnate, Redeemer most adored,  
All glory, praise, and honor, Be yours O sov'reign Lord. *[Chorus]*

*[Verse 3]*

O God, the Holy Spirit, Who lives within our soul,  
Send forth your light and lead us To our eternal goal. *[Chorus]*

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*i Readings for Trinity Sunday as published on UDCCB website:*

**7 SUN THE MOST HOLY TRINITY white Solemnity Ex 34:4b-6, 8-9/2 Cor 13:11-13/Jn 3:16-18 (164)**

**ii Mary M. McGlone, "Most Holy Ttinity: God For Us," June 11, 2017**

**iii Richard Rohr "Prayers for Our Community" and Joan DeMerchant, "Prayers: Holy Trinity."**

**iv Joan DeMerchant, Prayers: Holy Trinity**