**Solidarity with Sisters’ Communal Prayer**

**March 13, 2022 the Second Sunday of Lent**

*“Now is the acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation! Become an ambassador for Christ.”*

*(2 Corinthians 6:2, 5:20)*

**HELLOs,** then Betty mutes everyone. **(Suzie De Quattro & Betty Thompson)**

**WELCOME (Suzie De Quattro)**

Welcome, everyone!

* Betty and I were pleased to prepare our prayer for today.
* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* Thanks to Linda Donaldson, Debra Street and Keith Miller for leading our music.
* Thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today: Alicia Urban, Donna Ellerman, Marilyn Voigt, Sr. Marie McCarthy, Jim De Quattro, Mary Ott, Michele Gibbs, Bob Gallagher, Ed Hutchison, and Ann Jelen.
* If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please put a note in Chat or email later.

**SETTLING IN (Alicia Urban)**

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. Let your breath carry away 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 the Spirit to act in you.

Now Donna Ellerman and Linda Donaldson will lead us into prayer.

**OPENING RITUAL** **(Donna Ellerman and Linda Donaldson)**

God of our deserts, God of our transformation, God of our fruitfulness, God of all who forget you and all who return to you, God of all who hope for new life, we are here to listen to you.

Donna: Beloved Community, Lent calls us to become Ambassadors of God.

All: O God, we hear you calling.

Donna: Beloved Community, we begin just where we are.

All: O God, we hear you calling.

Donna: Holy One, you appeal to us for justice, peace, and communion for your Body!

All: O God, we hear you calling.

Donna: “Lent is a call to weep for what we could have been and are not. Lent is the grace to grieve for what we should have done and did not. Lent is the opportunity to change what we ought to change but have not…. Lent is about becoming, doing and changing whatever it is that is blocking the fullness of life in us right now.”

How we remove these blockages can change both us and the world. Let the words of Paul echo in us!:

We implore you in Christ’s name: know that you are a friend of God!. . . This is the acceptable time! This is the day of salvation! We beg you not to receive this grace of God in vain.

Let us pause and reflect on what is hindering us making this the acceptable time, and this the day of salvation. [*Pause for 2 slow deep breaths.]*

Let us pray together:

Donna (and All, muted):

I ask you, my sisters and brothers, to pray for me to our God.

Holy One, accept my deep sorrow for ways in which I participate in the brokenness of your world -- in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and what I have failed to do.

Thank you for your endless love for me, and for your forgiveness that comes even before I ask.

Strengthen me to take an active part in bringing your grace to the world, in the company o~~f~~ all your children, all the saints, and all the Earth. Amen.

Linda (and All, muted): Let’s state this intention in song.

Sent by our God am I.

My hands are ready now

to make the earth a place

in which your Kin-dom comes. (repeat)

The angels cannot change

A world of hurt and pain

Into a world of love,

Of justice and of peace.

The task is mine to do,

To set it really free,

So help me to obey,

Help me to do your will!

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME**  **(Suzie De Quattro)**

**Let it shine.**

Today we hear of Jesus shining out in fullness, radiant, astonishing.  We want to be both a witness to that radiance and a reflection of it.  Isn’t that the Gospel call to each of us?

Today we will look more closely at Peter, James and John and their varied reactions to the Transfiguration. Luke tells us that after seeing Jesus’ radiance, they fall asleep!  Waking to voices of Moses and Elijah they get busy building. But that energy and focus gives way to fear when they find themselves in a cloud.  Finally the voice of God names Jesus My Own Beloved.  And Peter, James and John fall silent and tell no one.

What can these three stories tell us about ourselves and the ways in which we can be transformed?  The ways we can let our light shine, be fierce, show mercy, plant dates.  We will focus on each portion of this gospel individually, with a different type of reflection following each.

*(Slight pause)*

Marilyn Voigt will read the scriptures, with Sr. Marie McCarthy inviting your reflection using music, commentary, and poetry. Jim De Quattro will offer questions for you to take into silence.

**GOSPEL, PART 1** [**Lk 9:28b-29**](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/9?28)  **(Marilyn Voigt)**

Jesus took Peter, John, and James  
and went up the mountain to pray.  
While Jesus was praying his face changed in appearance  
and the clothes he wore became dazzling white.

**Reflection on Gospel 1: (Sr. Marie McCarthy)**

We will now reflect on this gospel listening to Odetta sing “This Little Light of Mine.”

(Betty) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2kDsqGeoLU> play at 1.25, end at 2:03.

*[Slight pause]*

**REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS** *[Pause after each question.]* **(Jim De Quattro)**

How does **your** light shine?

What is it like to find light shining where you don’t expect it?

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

**GOSPEL, PART 2 Lk 9:30-33 (Marilyn Voigt)**

Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared and began conversing with Jesus.

Peter, John, and James had been overcome by sleep,  
but on hearing them became fully awake  
They saw Jesus’ glory, and the two people standing with him.  
As Moses and Elijah were leaving Peter said to Jesus,  
“Rabbi, it is good that we are here;  
let us make three tents,  
one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”  
But Peter really didn’t know what he was saying.

**Reflection on Gospel 2 (Sr. Marie McCarthy)**

A reflection adapted from Clarissa Pinkola Estes:

Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts for justice and peace… by small, determined groups who will not give up.

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these -- to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity. Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.

*[Slight pause]*

**REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS** *[Pause after each question.]* **(Jim De Quattro)**

When has your struggling soul caught fire from someone else’ light?

How are you standing up and showing your soul in dark times? How have you seen this affect others?

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

**GOSPEL, PART 3 Lk 9: 34-36 (Marilyn Voigt)**

While Peter was still speaking,  
a cloud came and cast a shadow over Peter, James, and John,   
and they became frightened when they entered the cloud.  
Then from the cloud came a voice that said,  
“This is my Own, my chosen One; listen to him.”  
After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.  
Peter, James, and John fell silent and did not at that time  
tell anyone what they had seen.

**Reflection on Gospel 3 (Sr. Marie McCarthy)**

A reflection adapted from a poem by Rubem Alves:

What is hope?  
It is a presentiment that imagination is more real  
and reality less real than it looks.  
It is a hunch  
that the overwhelming brutality of facts  
that oppress and repress is not the last word.  
It is a suspicion  
that reality is more complex  
than realism wants us to believe  
and that the frontiers of the possible  
are not determined by the limits of the actual  
and that in a miraculous and unexpected way  
life is preparing the creative events  
which will open the way to freedom and resurrection....

Let us plant dates  
even though those who plant them will never eat them.  
We must live by the love of what we will never see.  
This is the secret discipline.  
a stubborn commitment to the children of the future.   
Such disciplined love  
gives the courage to live so that

our own bodies  
become the seed of our highest hope.

*[Slight pause]*

**REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS** *[Pause after each question.]* **(Jim De Quattro)**

When have you experienced something wondrous that causes you to fall silent?

Talk with the Holy One about a word or phrase that feels very meaningful to you in these readings.

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

Betty: Now Mary Ott will lead our sharing.

**SHARING (Mary Ott)**

We know the wisdom of our community includes both words shared and silent listening. Now, if you’d like, we invite you to share the essence of what is arising within you from our readings and silence. Let’s begin in silence as we gather our reflections. [Long-ish pause]

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

*[Sharing]*

*[If there is extended silence during the sharing:]* Is there anyone else who would like to share?  *[Pause for 2 slow, deep breaths.]*

*[Stop by about 11:20.]*

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

Now Michelle Gibbs will lead us in prayer.

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY (Michele Gibbs)**

Let’s pause in silence to notice what prayer rises in us now. *[Pause….]*

Our response is: Christ, be our light.

God within us, give us wisdom and courage, fierceness and mercy, to shine with your light. For this we pray: Christ, be our light.

God among us, strengthen us and especially all women religious and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Recreate them, and each of us, for your purpose in this place and in this time. Give them, and each of us, courage to serve as leaders in our church and world. For this we pray: Christ, be our light.

God beside us, hold and inspire all the people impacted by the invasion of Ukraine:  the people living in and defending and fleeing Ukraine, all leaders making decisions regarding Ukraine, the Russian military and their families, and all peoples of the world standing in witness and in solidarity. For this we pray: Christ, be our light.

God everywhere, stretch our minds and hearts to remain mindful of other urgent situations that are getting few headlines. For this we pray: Christ, be our light.

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

(Shared prayers) Christ, be our light.

O You who love us more than we can imagine, we are grateful for this chance to give you our prayers, spoken and unspoken. We entrust the outcome to you. Amen.

We have offered our prayers, and now we will offer ourselves, led by Bob Gallagher and Linda Donaldson.

**OFFERTORY (Bob Gallagher and Linda Donaldson)**

(Bob) Holy One, we bring you ourselves, knowing you accept us just as we are and give us the grace to become more.

(Linda, singing twice): Take, O take me as I am.

Summon out what I shall be.

Let your seal upon my heart

And live in me.

(Bob):Reflect on your Lenten intention. *(Long pause)*

Holy One, we rely on your grace. We will use our time, our talents, and our treasure to work towards being your ambassadors in the world. Amen. *[Pause.]*

Now Ed Hutchison will lead us in our prayer of communion.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Ed Hutchison)**

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, we entrust ourselves to you and to one another.

Make us your bread of abundance.  Make us your wine of joy.

Let even our fragments be plenty to share.

Amen.

**THE JESUS PRAYER (Ann Jelen)**

Now let us join our hearts as if we could join our hands to pray in harmony with our family throughout the world:

**All (muted):**

Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother, Holy and blessed is your true name. We pray for your reign of peace to come, We pray that your good will be done, Let heaven and earth become one. Give us this day the bread we need, Give it to those who have none. Let forgiveness flow like a river between us, From each one to each one. Lead us to holy innocence Beyond the evil of our days — Come swiftly Mother, Father, come. For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy: Forever your name is All in One. Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING (Betty Thompson)**

As we close, let us feel this blessing upon us.

**Blessed are you**  
who bear the light  
in unbearable times,  
who testify  
to its endurance  
amid the unendurable,  
who bear witness  
to its persistence  
when everything seems  
in shadow  
and grief.

**Blessed are you**in whom  
the light lives,  
in whom  
the brightness blazes—  
your heart  
a chapel,  
an altar where  
in the deepest night  
can be seen  
the fire that  
shines forth in you  
in unaccountable faith,  
in stubborn hope,  
in love that illumines  
every broken thing  
it finds. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG “Christ, Be Our Light”** – Bernadette Farrell **(Debra Street &**

**Keith Miller)**

Longing for light, we wait in darkness  
Longing for truth, we turn to You  
Make us Your own, Your holy people  
Light for the world to see

Refrain: Christ, be our light!

Shine in our hearts,  
Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light!  
Shine in Your church gathered today

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.  
Longing for warmth, many are cold.  
Make us Your building, sheltering others,  
Walls made of living stone. Refrain

Longing for peace, our world is troubled,  
Longing for hope, many despair,  
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.  
Make us your living voice, Refrain

**RESOURCES**

* Opening Ritual – “Lent is a call…” quote from Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister: <http://rosemarieberger.com/2011/03/15/joan-chittister-lent-is-a-chance-to-grieve/>
* Reflection from Clarissa Pinkola Estes, “We were made for these times,” <https://www.awakin.org/v2/read/view.php?tid=548>
* Image after that reflection: Blue-gold artwork by Dmitry King <https://www.artfinder.com/product/blue-gold-shining-abstract-art/>
* “What Is Hope?” by Rubem Alves, Brazilian theologian –
* The universal prayer of Jesus from Parker J. Palmer<https://www.elkgroveumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Alternative-versions-of-the-Lord.pdf>
* Final blessing – Jan Richardson: <https://adventdoor.com/2014/12/12/advent-3-testify-to-the-light/>
* Christ, Be Our Light – Bernadette Farrell - 3 beautiful versions
  + <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlLgTyWidlw> (Nigerian choir)
  + <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5g0c4YeABTs> (Notre dame folk choir)
  + <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMkfKXLcm5Q>