



# Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community

•*Making Catholicism relevant* •*Restoring women's ordination* •*Living the change we envision*



Art by Paul Russo

## Feast of the Epiphany January 3, 2021

### Prelude

Today's prelude comes from National Public Radio (NPR). **"Should 2020 Be Forgotten? A Birmingham Choir Rings Out The Year With 'Auld Lang Syne'"**

From the pews of a church where white deacons once refused to seat African Americans, a group of Black singers in Alabama reminds us why preserving our memories of this historic year is vital — even if we'd rather just leave 2020 behind. <https://youtu.be/dCFdKpKLGxs>

## Introduction & Welcome

*Welcome to Mary Magdalene the Apostle Catholic Community based in San Diego, California, on the land that the Kumeyaay people have tended for generations. Today we gather from locations all around the world. Know that wherever you are and whoever you are, you are welcome here, just as you are. We are glad you are joining us.*

*For the best worship experience for all, you'll notice that we've muted you for the majority of the service. Despite being muted, we encourage you to sing along at home. At the time of the prayers of the people, you will be able to unmute yourself to offer a prayer. Prayer requests may also be offered in the chat at any time. You may wish to have bread and wine (or something similar) with you to share in our spiritual communion. Please also join us in saying the **bold** spoken responses in your home.*

*I invite you now to take a deep breath and center yourself in the presence of the Holy as we begin with our opening song.*

## Opening Song – The First Noël

The first Noël, the angel did say,  
Was to certain poor shepherds in field as they lay;  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

***Noël, Noël, Noël, Noël: born is the babe of Israel.***

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the east beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night. **(R)**

And by the light of that same star  
Three magi came from country far;  
To seek for a son was their intent,  
And to follow the star wherever it went. **(R)**

This star drew nigh to the northwest,  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest;  
And there it did both stop and stay  
Right over the place where Jesus lay. **(R)**

## Opening Rite

We begin our liturgy with the sign of our faith:  
+ In the name of God who shares divinity with us,  
Jesus, who shares humanity with us;  
And the Holy Spirit who unsettles and inspires us. **Amen.**

May the grace of Jesus the Christ, the love of God, and the peace of the Holy Spirit be with you.  
***And also with you.***

### **Knowing God's Loving-Kindness**

God who is Love, we long for Your presence in our lives.  
***Help us to know Your Love.***

Emmanuel, we gather to hear the Good News that Your love casts out fear.  
***Help us to receive Your Love.***

Sacred Spirit, may that Your love rise in our hearts and radiate through us to the world.  
***Help us to give Your Love.***

Holy and Infinite One, be present in our lives. Empower us to radiate Your love to our world and share our gifts with those around us. ***Amen.***

### **Gloria: Angels We Have Heard on High**

*[All are invited to ring bells or other noisemakers as we sing the Gloria]*

Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply,  
echo back their joyous strains. (R)

***Gloria in excelsis Deo!***  
***Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be  
which inspire your heav'nly song. (R)

See Christ in a manger laid,  
Whom the choirs of angels praise  
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid  
While our hearts in love we raise.

### **Opening Prayer**

O Star-flinging God, whose light dances across eternity, dazzle us into your presence this new year. Open our hearts to the mystery of your love. Awaken us to your presence, knit to the ordinary. Reveal to us what is possible, but not yet present. Heal us, that we might be healers. Transform us, that we might transform others. Reconcile us to you and to ourselves, that our living might be reconciling.

Stop us often, we pray, with news that is good, with hope that holds, with truth that transforms with a Word tailored to this trail we're on. May the word of your grace guide our steps, like the sun by day, and the north star by night, as we travel into the gift of a new year. Together we pray... **Amen.**

**First Reading**

Isaiah 60:1-6

A Reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah:

Arise, shine; for the time for your brilliance has come,  
and the glory of our God has risen upon you.  
For chaos shall reign over the earth,  
Long nights guided you in quiet preparation.  
As the sun now begins its increase,  
God's glory, conceived and formed in holy darkness,  
will be brought to birth.  
Nations shall come to your brilliance,  
and rulers to the brightness of your dawn.  
Lift your eyes and look around;  
Your scattered ones all gather together.  
They come to you!  
Your people of all genders will come from afar,  
All generations, including young ones on the hip.

Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.  
A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.  
They shall bring gold and frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the praise of our God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

***Thanks be to God.***

**Psalm: Gift of Love**

Gift of love, burning bright, pierces through endless night:  
God of life, sharing might, all creation holding,  
earth and sky enfolding. **R**

***Gift of love, love, love.***

***Gift of love, love, love.***

***Glorify be, God, to You, God of life and mercy.***

Jesus came on the earth, Gift of love, humble birth;  
shared our life, gave us worth; calling forth, inviting,  
Spirit now uniting. **R**

**Second Reading**

Ephesians 3:2-6

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Ephesians:

I trust you have already heard about the mission I have been given; to take up the cause of God's grace for you, that is, for those considered "outsiders." This mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I briefly described above. Reading about my conversion will enable you also to see into the mystery of the Christ.

In earlier generations, this mystery was not made known. Only in our time has it been made clear to the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles are co-heirs, members of the same body, and co-partners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, the good news of God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

***Thanks be to God.***

**Gospel Acclamation: O Holy Night**

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining  
It is the night of the dear babies birth.  
Long lay the world in pain and suff'ring pining.  
'Till Christ appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
The thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices!  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees. Oh hear, the angel voices.  
O night divine, Night when Christ was born  
O night divine, O night divine

Truly God taught us to love one another  
God's law is love and a gospel of peace  
Chains shall we break  
For we share one humanity  
And in God's name all oppression shall cease.  
Sweet hymns joy, in grateful chorus raise we.  
Let all within us praise God's holy name.

Christ is born! Oh hear the Angel voices.  
Noel, noel, O night, O night divine.  
Noel, noel, O night, O night divine. (Repeat)

Our God is with you. ***And also with you.***

A reading from the Gospel attributed to Matthew. ***Glory to You, O God.***

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the reign of Herod, Magi from the East arrived in Jerusalem asking, "Where is the newborn leader of the Judeans? We observed the child's star at its rising and have come to pay homage." When Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him. Calling together all the head priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this has been written by the prophet:

*And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a leader  
who is to shepherd my people, Israel.*

Herod secretly called for the Magi. He learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. He sent them along to Bethlehem, saying, "Go! Search diligently for the child! When you have found the newborn, bring me word so that I may also go and pay homage." Upon hearing these words of Herod, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star they had seen at its rising until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary, the mother, and they knelt down and paid homage. Opening their treasure chests, they offered gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Then, having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

The Gospel of God.

***Praise to you, Jesus the Christ.***

**Profession of Faith** - adapted from the writings of Lao-Tzu

***If there is to be peace in the world,  
There must be peace in the nations.***

***If there is to be peace in the nations,  
There must be peace in the cities.***

***If there is to be peace in the cities,  
There must be peace between neighbors.***

***If there is to be peace between neighbors,  
There must be peace in the home.***

***If there is to be peace in the home,  
There must be peace in the heart.***

## **Prayers of the People<sup>i</sup>**

The Good News of God-with-us cannot be contained! Even the rulers and the wisdom-bearers of the world have honored it with their distinctive treasures. Let us acknowledge the mystery and ask for all that we and the world need.

Our response: ***May we know oneness with You!***

That just as Isaiah's vision saw the magnificence of the world's gifts, may we share the even more magnificent gifts of love and generosity ... we pray ... ***May we know oneness with You!***

That our lives show forth our God-intoxication like the beauty of gold and the rich scent of frankincense and myrrh ... we pray ... ***May we know oneness with You!***

That we be as willing as the Magi to open our treasures to the Anointed One, and our hearts to the prophetic messages in our dreams ... we pray ... ***May we know oneness with You!***

That we devote our lives to embracing the manifestations of God in every person, in all life, and in all the mysteries of the immense diversity of the cosmos ... we pray ... ***May we know oneness with You!***

The Good News is that we all share the same inheritance. That our Mary Magdalene Community might embody that inclusiveness every day and in every action ... we pray ... ***May we know oneness with You!***

That we offer the embrace of Good News even to those who dismiss us and ridicule us ... we pray as Jesus said we should ... ***May we know oneness with You!***

Now it is time to bring to God the personal prayers and intentions of our Spirit-filled community of joys and sorrows and personal epiphanies. We remember as well the universal needs of all of us, who have been assaulted by the pandemic and by the racism, injustice, and violence of our time.

All who wish to share a prayer, please unmute your microphone and speak your prayer briefly and clearly.

Response: ***May we know oneness with You!***

Let us now take a moment to remember all the prayers here today that have remained unspoken, deep in the silence of our hearts . . .

(Short pause)

For these intentions and for all the prayers written in the chat box and in our online community prayer book . . . we pray ... **May we know oneness with You!**

**Closing Prayer of the Faithful:**

God-with-us, we offer you the prayers of our hearts and the gifts of our lives. As we mark this feast of the Epiphany, may You be made manifest in our lives as we work to share our gifts with the world. In our search for wisdom, may we be drawn ever closer to you, through Jesus the Christ, we pray... **Amen.**

**Offertory Song: Star-Child/ Niño: Es Astro**

Shirley

Erena Murray

Spanish Translation by Raquel Gutiérrez-Achón

Niño: es astro, Mediador de Dios;  
Niño Cristo, De los cielos luz.  
Oh Dios, dale en esta Navidad,  
Un día de Felicidad a la humanidad.

Star-Child, earth-Child, go between of God,  
love Child, Christ Child, heaven's lightning rod:  
This year, this year, let the day arrive  
when Christmas comes for ev'ryone, ev'ryone alive.

Es esperanza, es Niño del Señor;  
Niño humano, Astro de fulgor.  
Oh Dios, dale en esta Navidad,  
Un día de Felicidad a la humanidad.

**Our Eucharist**

Blessed are you, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life, sustaining us in our hunger.

***Blessed be God forever.***

Blessed are you, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink, sustaining us in our thirst.

***Blessed be God forever.***

Pray, friends, that sharing this bread and wine will enlarge our hearts and our souls to welcome and share with others more fully.

***Transform us, O God, and may Your star guide our way.***

## Prayer with our Gifts

Holy One, we bring you gifts not of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but bread and wine from the earth. Come into this bread and this cup and transform these ordinary objects as you change our hearts to shape and form your world with the joy you promise. Together we pray... **Amen.**

## Eucharistic Prayer<sup>ii</sup>

God dwells in you.

***And also in you***

Open your hearts to the One who is Love:

***We open our hearts to you, O God.***

Let us give thanks to God, who welcomes the stranger.

***To the One who reaches across every border, we give thanks and praise.***

Sacred Mystery, in holy darkness, the light of Your star rises. Through your radical welcome, you reveal the limitations of our own imaginations. You break down walls and boundaries we don't even realize we have erected. Like the magi guided by the light of star through foreign territory, you call us all towards you. You lead your people across borders of hate and into lands of curious and different. You strengthen us as we journey, learning and unlearning stories about one another. Gathered in your presence, we come to recognize the gifts of community rich in diversity. Let the clarity of Your vision for the universe take hold of us. In trust and thanksgiving, we treasure Your nurturing darkness and follow the rising star that leads us to Your gift of Love as we join with all creation in unending praise:

## Sanctus

## O Holy Night

***O holy night, the stars are brightly shining  
It is the night of the dear Baby's birth  
Long lay the world in pain and suff'ring pining  
'Til Christ appeared and the soul felt its worth***

***The thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn'  
Fall on your knees, O hear the angels' voices  
O night divine, O night when Christ was born  
O night divine, O night, O night divine.***

Holy Love, You move in mysterious way. Our journey with you is filled with more questions than answers. Each time we think we have you figured out, you surprise us again, revealing yourself in new ways. You revealed yourself in Jesus' birth. Born of our sister Mary in a town called Bethlehem, guarded by our brother Joseph with fatherly care, Jesus came among us as a baby, humbly born, cradled beside the animals and warmed by their breath, human as we are, in need of human love. Yet magi bowed down before him, bringing gifts, and emperors were troubled by his reign – this Child in whom all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

In Jesus, we saw your radical welcome of strangers extended in challenging ways. Ways that disrupt our traditions and unsettle our comfort zones. Jesus broke religious rules in order to include all people. He lifted up the sacredness of the people and places deemed unclean. He cared more about the well-being of the oppressed than his own reputation. Jesus taught us to rethink your presence among us, but we couldn't accept it. Resistant to transformation, your people sent him to the cross.

*[Please extend your hand, palm up, toward the bread and wine]*

In the mystery of Jesus, word and wisdom made flesh, You came to share in our struggles, and to cause Your love to shine in our hearts. Let Your Spirit come upon these gifts of bread and wine, to sanctify and transform them to become You in us, the body and blood of Christ, as we now fulfill Your command of love. We remember that...

***...on the night before Jesus died, while at supper with his friends, he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread and gave it to them saying: "Take this, all of you and eat. This is my body. Do this in memory of me."***

*[Pause]*

***In the same way, Jesus took the cup filled with wine. He gave You thanks, and gave the cup to his friends, saying: "Take this all of you and drink. This is my blood, the new covenant of God-with-you. Do this in memory of me."***

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

***God's Word and Wisdom became flesh, and dwelt among us.***

We remember in prayer all leaders, secular and religious. We hear Your Voice calling us to change. May they, and we, hear Your call for peace and justice and make this world a better place for people of every race, gender, nationality, and age.

We ask You to remember all of us, gathered today from locations all across the world. We remember all who are separated from their families, homes, and communities because of the pandemic, or because of selfishness, greed, hatred, famine, or war. We remember those whose lives have been blighted by violence, racism, or poverty – all whom the world counts as last and least. We remember all who now journey through sickness and suffering. We remember all who have died into the fullness of communion with You, especially members of our MMACC community.

Holy One, You poured Your Spirit on Mary and she sang words of defiance and hope, bearing the gift of Jesus for the world. The magi came from afar to bring him gifts of great worth. On this holy night, we remember that we are called to bear gifts, and that we are among Your gifts to the world, called to reveal Your love to all we encounter.

***Through Christ, may all creation unfold.  
With Christ, may all creation be one.  
In Christ, may all divisions be healed.  
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
may all glory and honor be Yours, forever and ever.***

## AMÉN/AMEN

Misa Santa Cecilia  
Estela García-López and Rodolfo López

A - mén, a-mén, a - mén. a - mén.  
A - men, a-men, a - men. a - men.

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### Prayer of Jesus

Kosits

Throughout the centuries, the prayer of Jesus, often known as the “Our Father,” has been translated and rendered in many different ways. At this time, we invite you to join us in praying in the language and words most comfortable to you. We offer this sung contemporary version:

*Loving God in whom is heaven;  
May your name be honored everywhere.  
May your kin-dom come, may your hearts desire  
Be done in us, by us, and through us.  
Give us the bread we need for each day;  
Forgive us, enable us to forgive others.  
And keep us from all anxiety and fear  
For you reign in the pow’r of love which is your glory  
Forever and ever amen.*

### Sign of Peace

Not an easy peace, not an insignificant peace, not a halfhearted peace, but the peace of God in Jesus the Christ be with you all.

*And also with you.*

Let us offer one another – and the whole world – a sign of Christ’s peace.

### Lamb of God

Angrisano

*Lamb of God, you call us to the gospel of Hope. O, Lamb of God.  
Lamb of God, you call us to the gospel of Love. O, Lamb of God.  
Lamb of God, you call us to the gospel of Peace. Grant us peace.*

We are the body and blood of Christ, the instruments of God’s peace in the world.

*We are called to be the hope this weary world needs.*

We believe that Christ is present with us whenever and wherever we are. So, the table you are using right now is no longer your table alone. It is part of Christ's table, and you are part of Christ's church. May all who share with us in this spiritual communion be united with us in the Body of Christ that knows no bounds. **Amen.**

### Communion Song: What Child is This?

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?

***This, this is Christ the One, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to praise our God, the babe, the child of Mary.***

Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here, the silent Word is pleading. **(R)**

Bring gifts of incense, gold, and myrrh, come peasant, rich in homage;  
our God made known, creation sings, let loving hearts give glory. **(R)**

### Prayer After Communion<sup>iii</sup>



When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among people,  
To make music in the heart.

HOWARD THURMAN, "THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS"  
in *The Mood of Christmas & Other Celebrations*, 1985

## Closing Blessing

May this holy season be for each of us a time of moving beyond what is “reasonable” and toward the star of wonder; moving beyond grasping tight to what we have to unclenching our hands and letting go, following Love and Truth where it leads, let the church say... **Amen.**

May this holy season be for each of us a time of moving beyond competition toward cooperation, moving beyond the anxiety of small concerns towards the joys of justice and peace, always moving toward the Divine promise, always aware God can be hidden in the frailest among us, always open to the unexpected presence of God in our midst. Let the church say... **Amen.**

And may the transforming acceptance of Mary and Joseph, the imagination of the shepherds, and the persistence of the magi guide us as we seek the Truth, manifesting that Love which embraces us all. Let the church say... **Amen.**

## Sending Forth

Our mass has ended. Our work to manifest God’s love to the world continues.

***Thanks be to God.***

## Closing Song: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!

Hark! The herald angels sing, such good news of joy they bring.  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;  
With th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! The herald angels sing, Such good news of joy they bring!

Christ, by highest heaven adored: Christ, the everlasting One.  
Late in time behold him come, Offspring of the maiden’s womb:  
Now in flesh the God we see, hail th’incarnate deity.  
Pleased as we together dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, Such good news of joy they bring!

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*We are grateful that you have joined us for worship tonight.*

*This Christmas finds many of us separated from family and friends, celebrating the season in new (and perhaps unusual) ways. Despite the distance that separates us, and the fact that we cannot gather as we normally would, we invite you to gather with us online as we celebrate this Christmas Season, remember the Christ Child that brings Hope to our weary world. As the pandemic surges, may you and all your loved ones be safe and healthy. May the Divine Love made flesh in the Christ child bring you Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love this Christmas season.*

~

*At Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community, we have embraced the dream of a transformed Roman Catholic Church. Financial support is essential to breathe life into this dream and to keep it alive for future generations. To underscore our commitment, we support a full-time paid priest and a variety of social justice activities, giving a percentage of our Sunday offering back into the community. To support our community, please visit <http://www.mmacc.org/donate>.*

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*Some song lyrics have been adapted to align with our commitment to inclusive language.*

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**Mass Settings:** Misa Santa Cecilia, © 2009, Estela García and Rodolfo López. Published by OCP.; Mass; “Lamb of God”- Music © 1997, Steve Angrisano, published by OCP.

Scripture Translations taken from the Comprehensive Catholic Lectionary by Nancy Corran and Jane Via, <https://www.inclusivelectionary.org/>

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<sup>i</sup> Prayers of the Faithful are written by Ray Trybus, a member of MMACC.

<sup>ii</sup> Our Eucharistic Prayer draws inspiration from many sources, including [enfleshed.com](http://enfleshed.com), past MMACC liturgies (written by Nancy Corran, Kori Pacyniak, Joe Stewart, Jane Via & MMACC’s liturgy committee), and other sources.

<sup>iii</sup> Adapted from Howard Thurman’s “The Work of Christmas”