

Our Lady of Mercy 2007

Jill Jenkins uses her body to protect that of a young man she and her husband, Maurice Gordon-Bey Sr., suspect may be associated with the killing Wednesday of their son, Maurice Gordon.

Photo by Monica Lopossay, *The Baltimore Sun*, Jun 14, 2007

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Call to prayer:

Soon we will arrive at the autumn equinox, time of delicate balance when light and dark equally divide the hours of our day. In many parts of the world, this equinox is celebrated as a harvest festival—a time to rejoice in and share the abundance of earth's fruits.

Yet here in Baltimore, things are out of balance. The darkness of violence threatens to overcome the light and the harvest of this violence is gnawing fear and intense self-protection.

It is a good time to be reminded of God's mercy, of Our Mother of Mercy, of our own call to mercy. In and through this evening's prayer, may we strengthen our resolve and beg for the grace to be emissaries of God's light in a dark time.

Opening Hymn: *Misericordias Domini*

(For ever will I sing the mercy of the Lord.)

Refrain: Mi - se - ri - cor - di - as Do - mi - ni in ae - ter - num can - ta - bo.

Verse 1: From age to age, through all generations, my mouth shall proclaim your truth O God.

Verse 2 : Who, O God, who in the universe, can compare with you?

Verse 3: Blessed be the Lord forever, now and eternally. Amen. Amen.

Jacques Berthier

Prayer:

Mother of dark soil,
morning star
and vast ocean—
Mother who births plants,
winged creatures,
fish of the sea
and four-footed beasts—
Mother who nurses the stars,
the planets,
the black universe—
Mother who suckles the children of the earth—
Mother who holds creation in strong arms,
rocking it through the ages,
with the lullaby of life—
Show us your face, O Divine Mother,
Show us your face.

from *Prayers for a New Millennium*
by Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB

Reading from Thomas Merton, *A Book of Hours*

The feminine principle in the world
is the inexhaustible source of creative realizations
of the Father's glory.

She is His manifestation in radiant splendor!
But she remains unseen, glimpsed only by a few.
Sometimes there are none who know her at all.

Sophia is the mercy of God in us.
She is the tenderness with which the infinitely mysterious
power of pardon
turns the darkness of our sins into the light of grace.
She is the inexhaustible fountain of kindness,
and would almost seem to be, in herself, all mercy.
So she does in us a greater work than that of Creation:
the work of being new in grace, the work of pardon,
the work of transformation from brightness to brightness
tamquam a Domini Spiritu.
She is in us the yielding and tender counterpart
of the power, justice and creative dynamism of the Father.

Period of Silence

Response: *My Soul Proclaims*

The Magnificat
Suzanne Toolan, RSM

My soul pro – claims your great – ness, O my God. My
spir – it re – joice – es in God my Sav – ior.

1. I sing your praises, God, with all my heart,
and I rejoice in you, O god of Life,
for you have looked upon my lowliness,
and who am I to merit your attention?
2. I may henceforth regard myself as happy,
because you have done great things for me.
And every generation gives assent,
for you are God and your name is holy.
1. You give your grace anew in every age
to those who live in reverence all their lives.
Grace is your strength but you unmask all pride;
you strip us bare of our self-conceit.

2. Dethroned are those who hold authority,
and poor and humble people you uphold.
You give in great abundance to the hungry
and send the rich away with empty hands.

Benedictine Sisters of Erie

All: Your people Israel you have remembered,
for mercy has been sent to all the faithful,
just as you promised to those before us,
to Abraham, to Sarah, their children forever.

My soul pro – claims your great – ness, O my God. My
spir – it re – joic – es in God my Sav – ior.

Prayers of the Women

Response: God of mercy, hear our prayer

Closing Prayer

Holy God, your mercy is our hope. Our hearts rejoice in your saving power. Give us, we pray, the grace to be your light and your compassion in the world you have given into our care.

We offer this prayer in the holy names of Jesus and Mary.
Amen

Closing Song: *Softly and Still*

Softly and still as night comes stealing,
we sing our vespers lay;
Silv'ry chimes of eve are pealing,
it is the end of day.

Refrain:

O Holy Queen of Heav'n , O Star of Hope so fair,
all praise to thee is giv'n, hear thou our evening prayer.

Guard us with love until the morrow
and keep our hearts from pain.
Fill us with hope and banish sorrow,
renew our strength again.

Refrain:

O Holy Queen of Heav'n , O Star of Hope so fair,
all praise to thee is giv'n, hear thou our evening prayer

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