

Day One: Morning

Calling on the Archangels

OPENING PRAYER

We gather this morning bringing our hearts to the love of thousands who shimmer across the veil, offering us support and guidance: the angels, saints, and ancestors who welcome us into a community of seekers. We call especially on the Archangels this morning, those beings of protection, calling, healing, and wisdom who surround us in the four directions to help illuminate our place in the world.

OPENING SONG: Welcome to this Circle

Welcome to this circle
where love and grace abound.
We honor your journey, and wherever you are bound.
We will walk beside you, encourage you on your way,
celebrate your spirit and hold you as we pray.

There is love for one like you.
There is grace enough to see you through.
And wherever you have walked, whatever path you choose
May you know there is love for one like you.

FIRST READING: Peter Stanford

Angels are central to that same history of yearning and the search to connect the visible with invisible. In cultures stretching back tens of thousands of years, there have been winged creatures who serve the gods and who make a bridge, or ladder, between the divine realm and the earthly one.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Love, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 91: All Who Dwell

All who dwell in the shelter, the refuge of God Most High
You will rest in the shadow of God the Almighty One
I will say that the Lord is my fortress in whom I trust
Surely God will protect you from trouble all through...

From the snare of the fowler, from pestilence deadly and dark
Under wings of protection, your God will draw you close
You'll not fear the night, for God's faithfulness shields you from harm
Surely God will protect you from trouble all through...
The terrors of night and the arrows that fly by day
A thousand may fall at your right, and ten thousand beside
But they will not come near you; the Lord is your refuge and might
Surely God will protect you from trouble all through your life
The angels will lift you, your foot will not strike a stone
Though you tread on a lion, it will not hunt you down
For God will protect you, beloved, and answer your cry
Surely God will protect you from trouble all through your life

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Genesis 28:10-12

He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Divine Love, how often I forget the presence and protection of the Archangels. When I am afraid, help me to call upon Archangel Michael's might, and grant me courage. Give me the grace to remember that I am so much stronger than I realize. I have stores of strength yet to draw from.

Sung Response O God of Love, circle and protect us.

Creator/Creatrix, you sent the Archangel Gabriel to visit Mary and herald the arrival of Jesus.

Send them to us that we may give birth to music, dance, and art, to ideas, writing, and teaching, and whatever creative thing we set our heart and mind to create. Help us be who we are, and be that well, following the North Star that you placed before us. We are listening for your divine messages. Help us to always hear you with clarity.

Sung Response O God of Love, circle and protect us.

Blessed Healer, so many things ail us. We often have need of physical healing, but our hearts, minds, and spirits grow weary, sicken, and even die, too. We ask that you make

haste to send Archangel Raphael to bring healing of whatever kind we have need for our aid. Help us also to remember to rest and be restored, and take time as often as needed to care for ourselves. We neglect our bodies sometimes. Teach us to be instruments of our own healing.

Sung Response O God of Love, circle and protect us.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response O God of Love, circle and protect us.

CLOSING SONG: Archangel Invocation

Come Michael.
Come Gabriel.
Come Raphael.
Come Uriel.

Verses:

1. Be by my side, there's a place for you here.
Be by my side, there's a place for you here.
2. Help me to heal and share light in my world.
Help me to heal and share light in my world.
3. Rest in my eyes and my ears and my touch.
Rest in my eyes and my ears and my touch.
4. Compassion and wonder and healing and grace.
Compassion and wonder and healing and grace.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing of the Archangels

This blessing rises on the wings of the archangels.

In moments of vulnerability,
may Michael protect you from harm.

Feel his wings surround you,
shielding you from arrows of doubt, despair,
ill will and manipulation.

May he help you to know your own strength
emerging from within like a storm
gathering force, a fierceness to shelter
what and whom you love most.

When you cross that final luminous threshold
into the next life

may Michael companion you
and bring you courage to open your eyes
and heart wide, to step into a new adventure.

In moments of discernment,
may you listen for Gabriel's call,
appearing as he did to Zechariah and Mary.

Receive him as divine messenger
and summon your courage
to offer your heartfelt yes
to this holy birthing.

When visions come in night dreams
and day-wondering, call on Gabriel
to help you listen for the meaning,
to unlock symbols like an ancient map
pointing the way ahead.

In moments of wounding and illness,
may you experience the healing force of Raphael
who stirred the waters at the Pool of Bethesda
restoring all to wholeness again.

Call on him to help knit together every rupture,
to return every ache to aliveness,
every disease to vibrancy.

And in the absence of cure,
may Raphael bring the gentle healing
of spirit, a heart expanded,
an embrace of tears and laughter.

In moments of confusion
and seasons of change
may you embrace the wisdom of Uriel
named the Light-Bringer
guiding you along the path.

Wisdom comes from lived experience,
a deep inner knowing of life's meaning
wrought from struggle and challenge.

Let Uriel help you stay present
in the midst of a difficult season,
help you to see the grace at work
amidst the sorrow and loss.

May he bring clarity and a renewed heart.

May the archangels surround you,
uplift you, guide you, and heal you.
May you know their luminous presence
at every season of your life.

SUNG AMEN



CREDITS

All songs and texts used with permission

Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: *Welcome to this Circle* by [Trish Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

First Reading: Peter Stanford *Angels: A Visible and Invisible History*. Hodder & Stoughton LTD (2019) page 7.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *Dearthairin o Mo Chroi*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2018, from [Celtic Psalms: Rest in the Shelter](#)

Second Reading: Genesis 28:10-12 (NRSV)

Prayers of Concern: Written by Claudia Love Mair

Sung Response: Words by Abbey Dream Team. Music by [Betsey Beckman](#). Arranged and performed by [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#) and [Simon de Voil](#) © 2023

Closing Song: *Archangel Invocation* by [Simon de Voil](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day One: Evening

Encountering Your Guardian Angel

OPENING PRAYER

As evening descends and darkness wraps itself around us, we call on the presence of our guardian angels to hold us through the night so we can enter deeply into the gift of rest. We release our anxieties and worries into their care, yielding to the stillness of night.

OPENING SONG: Holy Angels

You are held by holy angels;
Holy angels all around you.

"Hush, now, sleep child," sing the holy angels.

"We are holding you. You can rest.

Morning will come, child;

The dawn will break through the darkness.

We are holding you through the light of the newborn day."

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Love, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 23: The Lord is My Shepherd

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want

He lets me rest in pastures green

He leadeth me by waters still

He restores my soul; restores my soul

Even though I walk through the darkest vale

I will fear no evil, for you're with me

Your rod and staff, protect and guide

You comfort me; you comfort me

You prepare a table, a feast for me

In the presence of my enemies

You anoint my head with holy oil

My cup overflows; it overflows

Surely goodness and God's mercy great

Shall follow me all my days of life

And I'll dwell within the house of God

My whole life long; my whole life long

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: bell hooks

They are the guardian spirits who watch, protect, and guide us throughout our lives. Sometimes they take a human form. At other times they are pure spirit—unseen, unimaginable, just forever present. . . (they) are able to assist us in our spiritual growth. Unconditional lovers of the human spirit, they were there to help us face reality without fear.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING SONG: Queen of Angels

Queen of Angels, Mother Mary, Queen of Angels,
Wings of Wisdom taking flight,
Spirit of Her Love shining bright,
Spirit of Her Love shining bright.

Queen of Angels, Mother Mary, Queen of Angels,
Wings of Kindness taking flight,
Spirit of Her Grace shining bright,
Spirit of Her Grace shining bright.

Queen of Angels, Mother Mary, Queen of Angels,
Wings of Healing taking flight,
Spirit of Her Peace shining bright,
Spirit of Her Peace shining bright.

Queen of Angels, Mother Mary, Queen of Angels
Wings of Blessing taking flight,
All God's Children shining bright,
All God's Children shining bright.

Queen of Angels, Mother Mary, Queen of Angels
Wings of Mercy taking flight,
Spirit of Her Son shining bright,
Spirit of Her Son shining bright.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing of Your Guardian Angel

This blessing comes as a love note
being scrawled across the bright sky
with ink of feathers gliding,
a gentle whisper when you feel stretched thin,
when loneliness swallows you,
when your heart is unsettled,
or you feel utterly and completely lost.

Breathe once slowly, then again,
and with a third deep breath, close your eyes
and attune to the warmth of sheltering wings.
Feel your body yield into this loving presence.

When prayer feels impossible,
may your guardian angel
sing the sweetest sounds
kindling a new song in your own heart.

Feel your spirit lifted, courage wrapping
itself around you, your inner compass
guiding you to where you most need to be.
Feel your soul infused with the grace of peace.

See the span of the angel's wings
weaving together heaven and earth,
on a loom of Love,
lifting your voice in song
to join with the celestial harmony.

May you pay attention
to shimmering moments
and know your guardian angel
has beckoned you to pause,
to know this as gift.

May they bring you back
into alignment with the Holy desire for your life
and refresh you on the meadow of your days,
bless you with sacred dew.

SUNG AMEN



CREDITS

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Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: *Holy Angels* by [Sara Thomsen](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *The Parting Glass*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2015, from the album [Celtic Psalms Vol. 2](#)

Reading of the Night: bell hooks, *all above love: new visions*. HarperCollins (2001) pages 225-227.

Closing Song: *Mary, Queen of Angels* by [Lorraine Bayes](#) from the album [Birthing the Holy: Singing with Mary and the Sacred Feminine](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day Two: Morning

Wrestling with Angels

OPENING PRAYER

We pray this morning for those times when we are called to wrestle with an angel, sometimes in a dream, sometimes through a life challenge. Help us to discern when the Holy One is moving us beyond our comforts and patterns to enlarge us so that we might ask for the blessing and new name we desire.

OPENING SONG: A New Name (Jacob's Round)

Alone and afraid through the dark night
Wrestling with strength that won't let go.
As long as it takes, 'til morning breaks: a new name.

FIRST READING: Rainer Maria Rilke

The One Who Beholds

What we defeat are small things,
and this success makes us small.
The eternal and immense
does not want to be bent by us.
This is the Angel who appeared
to the wrestlers of the Hebrew Scriptures:
when his adversaries' sinews
stretched long like steel in battle,
he felt them beneath his fingers
like the strings of low melodies.

Whoever was overcome by this Angel,
who so often refrains from fighting,
they walk away upright and lifted
made great by that hard hand,
nestling and shaping them.
Victories do not tempt them.
Their way to grow: being utterly defeated
by the eternally greater being.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Grace, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 130: From the Depths I Cry to You

From the depths I cry to you, O God
Lord, listen to my voice
From the depths I cry to you, O God
Please listen to my prayer
For if you should mark iniquity
O Lord, who could stand?
But with God, forgiveness can be found
I wait in stillness for the Lord
And in God's word do I hope
More than those who watch for morning's light
More than those who watch for morning's light
Trust in God, you people, Israel
Who redeems you from sin
For with God, forgiveness can be found
My heart's not lifted up, O Lord
Nor my eyes raised too high
I do not think on things too great
I have calmed and quieted my soul
Like a child with mother quieted
My soul is at rest
For with God, forgiveness can be found

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Genesis 32:22-28

The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans and have prevailed."

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Holy One, the night is so long and the trials full of pain. Bless us during these times of struggle so we may prevail knowing that your Grace is with us all the while and we are not alone. The trials of life have shaped us as surely as the triumphs and joys. Help us forgive those who have wounded us. Help us forgive ourselves when we have wounded others. And open your arms wide so we may run to the shimmering presence of your love.

Sung Response O God of Love, walk with us through all things.

Godde of Outcasts, you call us to love all who live on the margins, just as Jesus did. Open our minds and our hearts to the stories, struggles, and triumphs of those we call “other” and recognize them as beloved by You. We know this work of facing our wounded and wounding places is like wrestling with angels – those beings who know our full capacity for love. Strike open our hearts so we may stand with people of all colors and creeds, amplifying the voices of those who have been silenced and ignored. Give us the grace to live in love.

Sung Response O God of Love, walk with us through all things.

Godde of Loving Care, this is not fair. Countries are at war, families ripped apart, children left orphans and parents left without their children. Famine, oppression, ecological disaster, abuse, and derision. We wrestle with these realities just as surely as we wrestle with the Love that holds it all. Soften us so we may respond with compassion. Give our hurting world a new name, and may that name be the fulfillment of Hope Everlasting.

Sung Response O God of Love, walk with us through all things.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response O God of Love, walk with us through all things.

CLOSING SONG: Calling All Angels

Calling all angels here to guide you.
Calling all angels to surround you.
Calling all angels to walk beside you.
Love, may you walk on solid ground.

CLOSING BLESSING

A Blessing for Wrestling with Angels

You have known
the long nights of wrestling
with mysterious beings,
your breath hard and fast,
your heart pounding

like furious wings.

The dark seems to stretch forever
and you wonder how long
you will be in the grip
of this powerful stranger,
how long you will have to hold on.

Then slowly the black pool above you
gives way to violet, fuchsia, tangerine
and you feel your hip wounded,
throbbing, pulsing with pain,
know you will be limping
for many years to come,
but before letting go
you make your demand:

Bless me, your voice thunders
and the being erupts into golden light
so glad that you had finally asked.
A new name sings out through the ether
like the most exquisite melody,
a chant for the new season ahead,
a name which reminds you of the long night
and how you would not relent,
how courage and hope and stubbornness
carried you through.

May you find endurance
when you are lost and disoriented,
may your wounds be reminders
of your willingness to struggle,
may you demand a blessing
as light begins its breaking,
and may your new name
call forth the gifts already inside you,
an offering of love to others
still wrestling in the dark.

SUNG AMEN



CREDITS

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Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: *A New Name (Jacob's Round)* by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

First Reading: Translation of Rainer Maria Rilke's poem "Der Schauende," from his Book of Images, by Christine Valters Paintner and Katharina Resch

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *The Quiet Land of Erin*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2015, from the album [Celtic Psalms Vol. 2](#)

Second Reading: Genesis 32:22-28 (NRSV)

Prayers of Concern: Written by [Melinda Thomas](#)

Sung Response: Words by Abbey Dream Team. Music by [Betsey Beckman](#). Arranged and performed by [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#) and [Simon de Voil](#) © 2023

Closing Song: *Calling All Angels* by [MaMuse](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day Two: Evening

We Are All Called to Be Saints

OPENING PRAYER

St. Paul wrote that we are all “called to be holy” and theologian Karl Rahner wrote that “The Christian of the future will be a mystic, or (they) will not exist at all.” As we gather for evening prayer help us to reflect on the ways we have lived in ways that reflect who we truly are, created in the image of God and following in the witness of the saints.

OPENING SONG: Litany of the Saints

Saint _____

Bless us with _____

Response: Stand with us, pray for us.

Beloved Ancestors,

Bless me with your kindness.

Response: Stand with us, pray for us.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Grace, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 8: Majestic is Your Name

Majestic is your name, O God

Your name in all the earth

Majestic is your name, O God

Your name in all the earth

When I see the work of your fingers

The moon, the stars, the sun

All things on earth are in their place

Majestic is your name

Majestic is your name, O God

Your name in all the earth

Majestic is your name, O God

Your name in all the earth

Who are mortals that you consider

Or that you think of them

They are underneath the angels

Majestic is your name
Majestic is your name, O God
Your name in all the earth
Majestic is your name, O God
Your name in all the earth
You have placed creation in our care
All that has life and breath
May we show respect and dignity
Majestic is your name

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Thomas Merton

It is true to say that for me sanctity consists in being myself, and for you sanctity consists in being yourself, and that in the last analysis your sanctity will never be mine, and mine will never be yours, except in the community of charity and grace. For me to be a saint means to be myself. Therefore the problem of sanctity and salvation is in fact the problem of finding out who I am, and of discovering my true self.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING SONG: All Shall Be Well (Julian of Norwich)

All shall be well, all shall be well,
All matter of things shall be well.
All shall be well, all shall be well,
All matter of things shall be well.

Rest in my embrace, my beloved, all is well.

Sleep in safety,
Let your cares melt away.
Place your heart in my embrace.

CLOSING BESSING

A Blessing to Become Yourself

This blessing sits in the quiet moments with you
and blesses the longings you feel,
stretching forth toward a vast presence,
a desire to know yourself as holy.
It whispers Merton's reminder:

to be a saint is to be yourself
and each day you try to release
all that is false and untrue.

Some days you know what it is
to see love everywhere,
to be astounded by the way light shifts,
to feel your heart lifted with a flock of swans
to rest in the smile of a loved one,
to know aliveness in the pulsing of blood
or in spring's explosion of color.
Some days it is the silence of the heart
and the fertile darkness which kindles love.
These memories become manna,
the sustenance that carries you forward
when life aches, when everything is raw,
or when you've lost feeling altogether.
They are like a muscle strengthened
so when you find a mountain ahead,
you know you will climb slowly, step by step.

This blessing comes like a summons,
so that when you encounter cruelty,
you shower kindness,
when you are met with greed
you shower generosity and service,
and when the world feels filled with hatefulness,
Love arises from every aspect of who you are.

You walk through this life with open hands,
your doubts, hopes, despair, grief, anger,
joy, the not knowing all welcome,
but you let Love be your compass,
let it guide you toward a more beautiful world
which you build with kindred spirits,
moment by moment, always unfolding,
both incomplete and fully here all at once.

SUNG AMEN



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Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *Far, Far Beyond Yon Mountains*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2022, from the album [Celtic Psalms: May We Rise](#).

Reading of the Night: Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*. New Directions (2007) page 31

Closing Song: *All Shall Be Well* (Julian of Norwich) by [Kathryn Christian](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

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Day Three: Morning

Embodied Love

OPENING PRAYER

We call upon the saints to bless this day ahead with patient anticipation as they witnessed to in their own lives. Let nothing disturb or frighten us, knowing that in the midst of life's unending tides of change, the Holy One endures and always holds us in love. We ask that this love help us to discern how to spend our precious moments today and all days.

OPENING SONG: Bookmark Prayer (Teresa of Avila)

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing frighten you.
Everything changes,
I alone remain.
Hold patience, for nothing is wasted.
Presence in all things
I'm with you in all things.

FIRST READING: Joseph Whelan, SJ

Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is, than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way. What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination will affect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the mornings, what you will do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, who you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Peace, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 146: Hallelujah

Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord as long as I live
I will sing praise to God with all of my being
I will trust not in rulers, they will pass into dust
But I will hope in the Lord our God, the one who will help
Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord as long as I live
I will sing praise to God with all of my being

Happy are those who hope in the God who redeems
The heavens, earth and seas belong to the Maker of all things
Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord as long as I live
I will sing praise to God with all of my being
To the poor God brings justice, to the hungry, a feast
Sets the prisoners free, meets the refugee, sing praise to the Lord
Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord as long as I live
I will sing praise to God with all of my being
The Lord lifts the lowly, to the stranger shows care
The widow and the orphan, God will never forsake
Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord as long as I live
I will sing praise to God with all of my being
God's goodness and mercy never come to an end
Our God will reign forever, hallelujah, Amen
Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord
Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord
Hallelujah, I will praise the Lord, Hallelujah, Amen

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Revelation 8:2-4

And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. Another angel with a golden censer came and stood at the altar; he was given a great quantity of incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that is before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

All Love, thank you for the witness of the saints. Though they embodied love, like us they were in bodies, subject to the same hungers, longings, and wounds that we are. We ask for the intercessions of these Spirit lovers gone before us, especially Saint Benedict. When we believe that we have failed, St. Benedict, pray for us, help us to remember that always we begin again. New day; new mercy. We give thanks always.

Sung Response O God of Love, we witness to your presence.

Gracious Healer, sometimes we hurt and hurt. Our pain can become so normalized that we stop praying for relief, we stop asking for and seeking help. In times when our suffering is prolonged, keep us mindful of the saints whose lives were dedicated to the healing arts.

Saint Hildegard was a woman of prayer, an artist, musician, mystic, and medicine woman.

When we need healing, guide us to ask for her prayers, and even look into her healing remedies that remain for our benefit to this day. St. Hildegard, pray for us, send us relief for our ills. For this we give our gratitude.

Sung Response O God of Love, we witness to your presence.

Lover of our soul, how often we get in a frenzy doing too much. We take on more than is necessary, and fail to rest and replenish our bodies, minds, and spirits. Sometimes we act as if everything is all on us. When we show up in this way, bring to mind Sister Thea Bowman, who was content to do her little bit. She said that if each one would light a candle, we'd have a tremendous light. Remind us that all we need to do is light our candle. Sister Thea, pray for us. Help us to understand that doing our little bit is an act of humility, and to give thanks for it.

Sung Response O God of Love, we witness to your presence.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response O God of Love, we witness to your presence.

CLOSING SONG: Christ is the Mirror (Clare of Assisi)

Christ is the Mirror; Christ is the Light.
Gaze on that Mirror and see yourself within.
All things are holy, all things are one.
Gaze on creation and see your soul within.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing of the Saints

May the communion of saints
shower you with blessings,
may you seek their guidance
in moments of illness, confusion, gratitude.
We remember their own struggles,
living their humanity, enfleshed and tender.
We ask those across the threshold to pray for us
knowing what it is to be wounded.
Call on the canonized saints,
Benedict, Francis, Ignatius, Hildegard,
Thea Bowman, Oscar Romero,
and the saints of spirit,
Howard Thurman, Dorothy Day,

and thousands of others
who witnessed to another way of being,
who helped to build a community of love.
Let them tether us to their earthiness,
and remind us of the holiness
of bone and blood, the grace of our bodies
in bringing love to the world
and the presence of heaven here and now.

Feel them stretching themselves
back across the veil toward us,
in sacred friendship
eyes shining, hearts radiant,
wisdom pouring like rainfall,
after months of drought,
coming with a reminder
that you are never alone,
never forsaken
and you dance in those life-giving
showers, celebrate Love as a visible
and invisible force, animating the world.

SUNG AMEN



CREDITS

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Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: *The Bookmark Prayer* (St. Teresa) by [Simon de Voil](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

First Reading: Joseph Whelan, SJ: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/prayers-by-st-ignatius-and-others/fall-in-love/>

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *Here's a Health*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2018, from the album [Celtic Psams: Rest in the Shelter](#)

Second Reading: Revelation 8:2-4 (NRSV)

Prayers of Concern: Written by Claudia Love Mair

Sung Response: Words by Abbey Dream Team. Music by [Betsey Beckman](#). Arranged and performed by [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#) and [Simon de Voil](#) © 2023

Closing Song: *Christ is the Mirror* (Clare of Assisi) by [Laura Ash](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day Three: Evening

Saints and Pilgrimage

OPENING PRAYER

We delight in the journey we have been called to travel, accompanied by the saints, those wise and well ones who reflect God's highest love. We travel in our imaginations to the sacred landscapes which shaped and formed these holy ones and see the world around us as pregnant with God.

OPENING SONG: You Are Sweet (Mechtild of Magdeburg)

You are sweet, sweet as the grape,
fragrant, fragrant as balsam,
as radiant, as radiant as the sun.
You are sweet, sweet as the grape,
fragrant, fragrant as balsam,
as radiant, as radiant as the sun.

You reflect my highest love.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Peace, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 65: You're the Hope

You're the hope of the farthest oceans
And the hope of the ends of earth
You redeem us from all our sorrows
You bring hope when a new day comes
Will you listen and will you answer
When our sorrows overwhelm
When the dark clouds gather round us
You bring light when the morning comes
You're the hope of the farthest oceans
And the hope of the ends of earth
You redeem us from all our sorrows
You bring hope when a new day comes
By your strength you have formed the mountains

And you silence the stormy sea
When our hearts are in roaring tumult
You bring peace when the evening comes
You're the hope of the farthest oceans
And the hope of the ends of earth
You redeem us from all our sorrows
You bring hope when a new day comes
Great redeemer of all creation
Great salvation of all that lives
When our spirits are filled with sadness
You bring joy when tomorrow comes
You're the hope of the farthest oceans
And the hope of the ends of earth
You redeem us from all our sorrows
You bring hope when a new day comes

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Barbara Holmes

Spiritual transience is the story of biblical call. Inevitably you find yourself in places you never expected to be. The willingness to wander at the bidding of the Spirit is settled long before the journeys begin. . .

There are no linear paths when you follow the contemplative way.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING SONG: This World is Pregnant with God (Angela of Foligno)

Refrain: This world is pregnant with God.

This world is pregnant with God.

How is it that everything I see, everything I see is of God?
How is it that everyone I meet, everyone I meet is family?
Beneath the soil in the empty fields swells the song of life sounding hope.
Do you not feel pangs of labor pain for emerging life all around?

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing the Journey

May you see all of life as a pilgrimage,
walking a sacred path toward intimacy
with all the invisible ones
who journey alongside us.

Ask that your steps each be blessed
with guidance and humility,
that you release the need to know
where you are headed
and trust the path itself.
May you be blessed with an open heart
to receive the stranger along the way
as well as deep within.

Call on the great communion of pilgrims
throughout time who wandered
for love of the great Journeyer.
Remember Jesus who walked dusty roads
healing others and feasting with outcasts,
the desert mothers and fathers
traveling to wild solitary places
for radical communion with God.
Remember Francis and Ignatius
journeying to Rome for study and guidance,
Teresa setting up her monasteries,
Hildegard preaching Sophia's wisdom,
the Celtic monks seeking to dwell on the edges,
making a sanctuary upon islands in the sea.
Know their impulse to seek a new horizon
as one that calls you onward as well.
Feel their love lightening your burden,
drawing you closer to the One
who shaped you, who shows you
you are always both in exile and at home,
who reminds you that love
is all you need to carry.

SUNG AMEN



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Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *Rathlin Island* (Brian Connors), Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2022. From the album [Celtic Psalms: May We Rise](#).

Reading of the Night: [Barbara Holmes](#), *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church*, Augsburg Fortress Publishers (2004), page 130.

Closing Song: *This World Is Pregnant with God* (Singing with Angela of Foligno) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day Four: Morning

Blessings of Our Ancestors

OPENING PRAYER

This morning, let the great cloud of witnesses be as near to us as our breathing, help us to feel the presence of our wise and well ancestors pulsing within us. Help us to feel their abundant blessing on our lives as they grieve with us and celebrate our joys. We ask them to bless our feet and guide us on our path ahead.

OPENING SONG: Ancestor Song

Will you bless this path I walk?
Ancestor, bless this path I walk.

Will you walk, will you walk beside me?
Will you walk, will you walk beside?

Will you guide, will you guide my feet?
Ancestor guide, will you guide my feet?

FIRST READING: Cole Arthur Riley

I believe in a spiritual realm that is so enmeshed with the physical that it is imperceptible.
I believe in the mysterious nearness of my ancestors,
but I believe they are located at the site of my own blood and bone.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Wisdom, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 98-99-100: Sing to the Lord

Refrain: Sing to the Lord, to the Lord a new song, Sing to the Lord, sing all the earth

Make a joyful noise to God
Earth and heaven break into song
Singing praise to God on high
With voice and whistle and fiddle's sound

Refrain

Let the sea and all that fills it
People that on earth do dwell

Hills and valleys sing together
In the presence of God on high

Refrain

God is King; the people tremble
We will praise your holy name
Mighty King of peace and justice
Great and marvelous are your ways

Refrain

Moses and his brother Aaron
Called unto your holy name
Crying to the Lord our God, who
Answered them in a pillar of cloud

Refrain

The Lord our God gave answer to them
And forgave them all their wrongs
We'll extol your holy name
And worship you on a mountain high

Refrain

Make a joyful noise to God
With thanksgiving, bless your name
For the Lord is gracious and your
Steadfast love will always remain

Refrain

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Spirit of All that Was, and Is, and Is to Come, open our hearts to the presence of wise and well ancestors. Their stories may be forgotten, their names unknown, yet still we know they are with us just as surely as our blood and bone. Help us listen across the ages to the experience of those who have come before, whose very lives led to our own. We ask to feel and receive their wisdom knowing it comes from love.

Sung Response O God of Love, shower us with blessing.

Sacred Ancestors, you know living can be so difficult. Confusion and pain, times of joy and times of sorrow weave in and out of our days. Companion us on this path. Walk with us, guide us as we make choices and respond to all that is placed at our feet. So much is beyond our control and yet there is so much we can do. Bless us as we work to create more beauty and love in this world for ourselves and all who share in this life – our human kin, animal companions, and the living Earth.

Sung Response O God of Love, shower us with blessing.

Cycle of Sacred Life, we know that one day we will die. From dust we are born and to dust we will return just as our ancestors who came before us. Let us offer blessings of celebration for their lives and gratitude for the life we have been given. On the day of our death receive us with joy into the great cloud of witnesses so we too will become wise and well ancestors, supporting and blessing generations to come.

Sung Response O God of Love, shower us with blessing.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response O God of Love, shower us with blessing.

CLOSING SONG

Blessing to the World

You are the heart. You are the hands.
You are the voice of Spirit on Earth.
And who you are and all you do
Is a blessing to the world.

We are the heart, we are the hands.
We are the voice of Spirit on Earth.
And who we are, and all we do
Is a blessing to the world.
We're a blessing to the world.
We're a blessing to the world.

We are the heart, we are the hands.

CLOSING BLESSING

The Blessings of Our Ancestors

This blessing calls you home again
to your collective inheritance of blood and bone,
calls you to dance with generations
who shimmer beyond the veil.

We call on the great cloud of witnesses,
the ones who inspire our courage,
support our endurance,
kindle our joy, whisper words of hope.
May the wise and well ones,
who are vibrant and radiant with healing,
who have stepped into the expanse of love
without hesitation, whose hearts are open wide,
shower you with their blessing
so you know your ancient inheritance.
Stand at a threshold
and whisper some of their names,
grandmothers and grandfathers,
back through hundreds and thousands of years,
prayers and supplications
for all that helps you navigate this world with ease.
May they form a circle of protection around you
to guard from anything that would wish you harm.

Open the eyes of your heart to see
they are already here, already dancing
through your feet, your hips, your hands,
the embrace of your arms,
the undulations of your spine, the smile on your lips.
This blessing dances in the threshold space with you,
at the turning of dawn or dusk,
helping your heart stay open, attuned,
to the wisdom pouring forth.
Sing aloud of gratitude, ask them to surround you,
knowing they are already present,
it is only your vision that must change to see.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: *Ancestor Song* by [Te Martin](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

First Reading: [Cole Arthur Riley](#), *This Here Flesh: Spirituality, Liberation, and the Stories That Make Us*.
Convergent Books, 2022, (pg 60)

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *Willy Taylor*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2013, from the album [Celtic Psalms Vol 1](#).

Second Reading: Hebrews 12:1 (NRSV)

Prayers of Concern: Written by [Melinda Thomas](#)

Sung Response: Words by Abbey Dream Team. Music by [Betsey Beckman](#). Arranged and performed by [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#) and [Simon de Voil](#) © 2023

Closing Song: *Blessing to the World* by [Karen Drucker](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (Ave Maria Press)

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Day Four: Evening

Healing the Wounds of Generations

OPENING PRAYER

This evening let us remember those ancestors who carry the wounds and deep scars of unhealed trauma, we know these places of binding also dwell within us. Sometimes a grief erupts in our hearts bigger than us, extending back generations. We ask the great Healer and the wise and well ones to be with us as we send light to bring them out of the shadows and shower them with love.

OPENING SONG: Go in Peace

Go in peace, you are loved, you are loved.
Go in peace, you are loved.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Wisdom, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 22: My God My God

My God, my God; my God, my God
Why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me
from the groaning words I speak?
O God I cry by day, by night,
but Lord, you do not hear
My God, my God; my God, my God
Why have you forsaken me?
I am scorned by all, despised by all
Their insults hurled at me
“Oh let the Lord in whom he trusts
deliver him from this!”
Yet from the womb you brought me out
and made me trust in you
My God, my God; my God, my God
Do not be far from me.
Poured out like water from a sieve
Heart melted away within

My strength is dry, like shards of clay
I am in the dust of death
But you O Lord, be not far off
Oh strength, come quick to help
My God, my God; My God, my God
Deliver me, I pray
Your name, O Lord, I will declare
for you have heard my cry
For you have heard the suffering one: you have not hid your face
The poor will share a feast with you
And they'll be satisfied
My God, my God, My God, my God
Your name I will declare

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Numbers 14:18

(The Holy One) is slow to anger and filled with unfailing love, forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. But (God) does not excuse the guilty. (God) lays the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING SONG: Sending You Light

I am sending you Light, to heal you, to hold you.
I am sending you Light, to hold you in Love.

No matter where you go,
No matter where you've been,;
You'll never walk alone
I feel you deep within.

So, I am sending you Light, to heal you, to hold you.
I am sending you Light, to hold you in Love.

No matter what you feel or what you choose to show,
I'm always there for you
And so I want you to know -
That I am sending you Light, to heal you, to hold you,

I am sending you Light, to hold you in Love.

I walk the path with you;
Go slow, dear one, don't hurry.
I'll go just like you need to go;
There is no need to worry.
'Cause I am sending you Light, to heal you, to hold you
I am sending you Light, to hold you in Love.

CLOSING BLESSING

A Blessing for Healing

You know there are still ruptures
across the generations,
the wounds of loss, betrayal, violence.

Ask the Beloved
and the ancient ones to bring healing.
Whisper with them to the wounded ones:
May you find yourselves
dancing among trees and swimming
in a vast sea of love.
May you be healed
from the painful wounds of your earthly life.
May you encounter
the deep peace of your dreams
and may the joy hidden in your
blood and bones be released
to ripple across time.
Blessed be your memory
and in my act of remembering
may I help to untangle the knotted threads
allowing them to dissolve
release the secrets and shame,
let them be transmuted through grace.

May you dance in your birthright,
may the joy remain, fill the hollow spaces within
may you be set free from the binding of your struggles,
may you receive the gifts of your wisdom,
and may you be woven together
into a vast community of love.

SUNG AMEN



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Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *Paddy's Green Shamrock Shore*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2013, from the album [Celtic Psalms Vol 1.](#)

Reading of the Night: Numbers 14:18 (The New Living Translation) (Adapted)

Closing Song: *Sending You Light* by [Melanie DeMore](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

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Day Five: Morning

Grieving Our Losses

OPENING PRAYER

We greet this morning remembering all those we have lost, allowing grief to become a witness to the ways we have loved lavishly and freely. We make space for the deep cries of the heart, our fierce and tender lament knowing God holds these with us, gathering our tears in a sacred vial.

OPENING SONG: Weep with Me

Weep with me for darkness I have been.
Weep with me for darkness I have seen.
Weep with me for all that I have known,
For when the heart's divided it wanders far from home.

<i>A mhuire na ngrás</i>	(Hail Mary, Full of Grace.
<i>A mhaithir Mhic Dé</i>	Hail, Mother of God.
<i>Go gloise tú sa dorchadas mé.</i>	Hear me in the Darkness.)

<i>A mhuire na ngrás</i>	(Hail Mary, Full of Grace,
<i>A mhaithir Mhic Dé</i>	Hail, Mother of God.
<i>Go sabhála tú me</i>	Heal Me)
<i>Go sabhála tú mé.</i>	

Hold me in your arms
Hold me in your arms
Hold me

See me in your eyes
See me in your eyes
See me.

Know me in your heart
Know me in your heart
Know me.

For all can be,
Earth, sky and sea.

Turas numinous don chroí. (Sacred journey of the heart.)

FIRST READING: Henri Nouwen

As we grow older, we have more and more people to remember, people who have died before us. It is very important to remember those who have loved us and those we have loved. Remembering them means letting their spirits inspire us in our daily lives. They can become part of our spiritual communities and gently help us as we make decisions on our journeys. Parents, spouses, children, and friends can become true spiritual companions after they have died. Sometimes they can become even more intimate to us after death than when they were with us in life. Remembering the dead is choosing their ongoing companionship.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Hope, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 13: How Long

How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long, how long, O Lord?
Will you hide your face away from me
How long, how long, O Lord?
How long must I bear the anguish of my soul?
How long, how long, O Lord?
And have sorrow in my heart through all of my days?
How long, how long, O Lord?
Consider and answer, O Lord my God
How long, how long, O Lord?
Give light to my eyes, or I'll sleep as in death
How long, how long, O Lord?
But I trust in your love, and my heart shall one day rejoice
How long, how long, O Lord?
I will sing to the Lord, who is gracious and loving
How long, how long, O Lord?

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Jeremiah 31:15

A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Comforting One, grief often feels too heavy a burden to shoulder alone. Be our Simon of Cyrene and help us bear the heavy crosses of our losses. We know we are not alone in our mourning, but sometimes it feels like we are. You sent your Spirit like a dove to Jesus at his baptism. It feels as though we've been baptized in a river of our tears. Please send your Spirit of Love and Comfort to console us, and even in our pain we will remember to thank you.

Sung Response O God of Love, hold us in our mourning.

One Who Hears, there are days that we, too, raise our voices in bitter lamentation, like Rachel in Ramah, weeping for our lost loved ones, refusing to be consoled, because they are no more. In these times, when no promise of a resurrection or far-off heaven brings relief, hear our cries. Listen to our keening and moaning. Steady us as we thrash in the endless nights, then cradle us, each one, as you would a very small child, rocking us tenderly until we fall asleep.

Sung Response O God of Love, hold us in our mourning.

Breath of Spirit, sometimes it is enough just to breathe. Help us to do this right now, and as often as needed. Help us to pause. Take a few moments to sit with you, with all our pain. Nothing more to do than breathe. Breathe in. Breathe out. Nothing we must feel. Or not feel. Just be. With You. Breathing in. And out.

Sung Response O God of Love, hold us in our mourning.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response O God of Love, hold us in our mourning.

CLOSING SONG: We Remember Them

We remember them in the rising moon.
We remember them in the mourning dove.
When the waters rush upon the shore
We remember them singing ever more.

And they too shall live
As they are woven into us.

I remember you singing ever more.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing for Grief

This blessing sits with you in the ache
and dark cave of loss.

Let your voice ring out into the hollow space
of stone and bone,
a wail, a cry, a lament.

Call on wise ones to surround you,
Michael the Archangel,
Mary, Our Lady of Sorrow,
Sister Death,

and any other ancient ones
whose presence would be steadying.

You do not have to be consoled,
you do not have to hold back the river of tears
you do not have to hold it all together.

Rest your spine back against the soft rock
and feel yourself held by Earth,
by the saints and ancestors

who knew their own landscape of loss.

Give yourself over to this holy time of grief
a witness to the expanse of your love

And when the heaviness is too much to bear
ask the mountains and the oceans
to carry the weight in their enormous arms.

Notice all the places you still hold back
and soften, surrender, release.

Hear Jesus's cry of abandonment from the cross
and know this mourning as part of your humanity.

Let this blessing carry you as well,
to the far distant shores of your longing.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: *Weep with Me* by [Deirdre Ní Chinneíde](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

First Reading: Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith HarperOne*, 1997 (entry for August 29)

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *The Lament of the Three Marys/Coineadh na dTrí Muire*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2018, from the album [Celtic Psalms: Rest in the Shelter](#)

Second Reading: Jeremiah 31:15 (NRSV)

Prayers of Concern: Written by Claudia Love Mair

Sung Response: Words by Abbey Dream Team. Music by [Betsey Beckman](#). Arranged and performed by [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#) and [Simon de Voil](#) © 2023

Closing Song: *We Remember Them* by [Trish Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (used with permission from Ave Maria Press)

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Day Five: Evening

Ancestral Pilgrimage

OPENING PRAYER

As evening's darkness spills from the sky, we remember the many places our ancestors are from, the lands they called home, the mountains and seas, rivers and meadows which shaped their imaginations. We know these landscapes shape our imagination as well and we journey to these ancient homelands in our heart to find a place of reconnection, to come home again in a new way.

OPENING SONG: The Spirits Are Here with Us

The Spirits are here with us
Healing Spirits
The Spirits are here with us
Loving Spirits
The Spirits are here with us
The Spirits are here with us

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Hope, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 122: Peace Be With Jerusalem

I was glad when they said to me
Let us go to the house of God
Now we stand within your gates Jerusalem

Peace be with all people
Peace be with all nations
Let us seek the good of all
Let us dwell in peace

Peace be with Jerusalem
Peace be with you everyone
Peace be with my kindred
Peace be with all my dear friends

Peace be with all people
Peace be with all nations
Let us seek the good of all
Let us dwell in peace

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Vincent Harding

The voice (of the ancestors) has entered so profoundly into me that I am flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone, song of their song, pain of their pain, hope of their hope. . . I believe that ancient rivers of our people flow in them. I hear their voices, and I know what it means. It means I am called to be father, rock, and strength, encourager for the struggles of tomorrow, baptizer in the rivers of their past.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING SONG: In My Heart is the Road

In my heart is the road and I will not be hurried.
In my heart is the road; bless my feet on the journey,
to Jerusalem. To Jerusalem.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing for Ancestral Lands

Even if you never make the physical journey
to the lands of your ancestors
those lands journey in you:

The rivers flow through your blood,
the mineral and stone in your bones,
the echo of the breezes in each breath,
the storms and sunshine radiating in your heart,
the rise and fall of tides with each pump,
a deep knowing of your original indigenous self.
Close your eyes and feel yourself arriving home
to remember your inheritance
as a child of the land.

And if your travels have brought you
on ancestral pilgrimage,
you know the courage and endurance demanded,
a dance between belonging and being adrift,

you know these weren't a mere passing through,
but an offering, a reaching into the past,
a carrying of treasure into the future.
Let this blessing open a door
into memory, pause and listen
to the language, the rumblings of earth,
the lulling of lakes, the way stone feels beneath your feet.
Find nourishment in the fruits of the table
the grains kneaded into bread.
Give gratitude for this bit of ground
from which your ancestors emerged.
know its contours as the shape of your dreams
and your most sacred imagination.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: *The Spirits Are Here with Us* by [Soyinka Rahim](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *A Fig for a Kiss*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2022, from the forthcoming album [May We Rise](#).

Reading of the Night: Vincent Harding, "I Hear Them. . . Calling," in Callings, ed. James Y. Holloway and Will D. Campbell (New York: Paulist Press, 1974), 31-39. Page 39.

Closing Song: *In My Heart is the Road* by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Soul's Slow Ripening: Songs for Celtic Seekers](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (used with permission from Ave Maria Press)

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Day Six: Morning

Cosmology, Myth, and Song

OPENING PRAYER

As birdsong streams through the morning air, we remember the songs our ancestors sang, the stories they told, the way they searched for meaning in their lives. We know these things like a native tongue, threading through our own longings. Guide us this day to hear the wisdom still echoing across the generations.

OPENING SONG: Grandmother Song

I hear the voice of my grandmother calling me.
She says wake up, wake up, children, wake up, wake up.
Listen, Listen . . . Listen, listen.

May the rivers all run wild.
May the mountains go unspoiled.
May the air be clean,
May the trees grow tall.
May there be love for every mother and child.
May there be love for every woman and man.
May there be love -- for every being in the wild.

FIRST READING: Sandra Easter

Coming into a more conscious relationship with the ancestors is a home coming, a return to origins, to a way of knowing, seeing, and being in relationship with the world that has been and is part of our collective inheritance.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Justice, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 139: You Have Searched Me

You have searched me and known me, Holy Lord
Know when I sit and rise
You're acquainted with my ways
Where I go and where I lie
You know each word completely

before I speak it, Lord
You lay your hand upon me
hem me in behind, before
Where can I flee from your spirit
Or from your presence go?
If I rise up to the heavens
Or descend to the depths below
If I take the wings of the dawn to
the far side of the sea
Even there, your hand will hold me fast
your right hand will guide me
For you formed my inmost being
within my mother's womb
When I dwelt within that secret place
I was not hid from you
You ordained that the days before me
be filled with love and grace
Made me beautiful and wonderful
for this I give you praise
How precious is your every thought
how vast the sum of them
Though I try to count them
they are more than every grain of sand
O that you would pull down the ones who
do harm and seek to gain
My heart is heavy and I long
for goodness and love to reign
Search me, O God, and know my heart
know every anxious thought
And lead me on the path of
your everlasting way

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Colossians 3:15-16

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

Timeless One, the memory of the Cosmos is long and holds the stories of our ancestors.

When we feel trapped in the limitation of our own narratives help us reach out to the wisdom of generations who shared the same search for meaning, love, and joy. May we find strength in looking to what came before and gain support for the journey ahead.

Sung Response O God of Love, speak to us in Story.

Godde of Sorrow and Joy, our collective inheritance is filled with toxic patterns affected by war, famine, plague, racism, and the everyday slights that wear us down. And yet there is hope. Our collective memory is also filled with song and dance, laughter and love. Give us the courage to face the ancestral trauma unwillingly housed in our bodies so that as we do this work, we are empowered to disrupt toxic cycles and become a healing balm for this generation and generations to come.

Sung Response O God of Love, speak to us in Story.

Mother of Creation, we are but threads in the tapestry of life. Our ancestors and siblings are human and more than human. May we hear the song of salmon and badger, honeysuckle and sweetgrass as clearly as the beating of our own hearts. As we recognize our kinship with all the Earth, help us to be faithful stewards of the land and its inhabitants knowing we are not sovereign but participants in this great Matrix of Being. Inspire us to care for one another.

Sung Response O God of Love, speak to us in Story.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response O God of Love, speak to us in Story.

CLOSING SONG: Following the River Home

Following, following the river home,
We're following the river home.
Waters of life, heart of the trees,
We're singing our beauty back home.
Mother nature - wild and free,
We're singing our beauty back home.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing for Origins

This blessing comes as an ancient story

of how your people made sense of the world,
through famine, wars, plagues,
and times of abundance and celebration,
how they sang and danced
their cries, their joys, their sorrows.
Know these myths as your own,
look for what ties them to your own cherishing
and your sense of aliveness.
Let this blessing anchor you in meaning,
the kind that emerges over generations
of wrestling and loving,
the kind that still shimmers in us as dreams,
and when you awaken
you know you've had a visitation.
Let the stories and songs
be a spiral path you can walk,
ancestral wisdom flowing forth
and deepening at every turn.
Learn these words, these tunes,
these movements by heart,
in your darkest hour let them return
to you like a summons and gift,
a map to guide you home again.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: *Grandmother Song* by Sandy Vaughn, adapted by [Lorraine Bayes](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

First Reading: Easter, Sandra. *Jung and the Ancestors: Beyond Biography, Mending the Ancestral Web*. Muswell Hill Press. Kindle Edition.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *The Banks of Claudy*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2015, from the album [Celtic Psalms Vol 2](#).

Second Reading: Colossians 3:15-16 (NRSV)

Prayers of Concern: Written by [Melinda Thomas](#)

Sung Response: Words by Abbey Dream Team. Music by [Betsey Beckman](#). Arranged and performed by [Alexa Sunshine Rose](#) and [Simon de Voil](#) © 2023

Closing Song: *Following the River Home* by [Lorraine Bayes](#) from the album [Earth, Our Original Monastery: Singing Our Way to the Sacred](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (used with permission from Ave Maria Press)

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Day Six: Evening

Becoming Wise and Well Ancestors

OPENING PRAYER

This evening we reflect on all the ways this day we have lived fully into love's call and the ways we have neglected kindness and care in favor of efficiency. We know the ancestors continue to bless us and long for us to lead lives of meaning, creativity, and radiance. We ask God, the Great Artist, to guide us to help our lives become works of art.

OPENING SONG: Cypress Seed Song

I hold in my hand these seeds of the future,
the courage to live and the courage to die.
This gold in my hand, these seeds of the future;
Put your hand in my hand and we'll reach to the sky.

Light shines on the seeds of the future;
Light shines on the leaves of the past.
I walk on the land of my mother
who nourished these seeds so that courage might last.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Justice, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 1: Their Delight

O blessed are the ones who walk God's way
Their delight is in the love of God
Who meditate by night, by day
Their delight is in the love of God
They are like the trees grown in flowing streams
Their leaves will not wither, their fruits are very sweet
In all that they do they will flourish and thrive
Their delight is in the love of God
O blessed are the ones who mourn and weep
Their delight is in the love of God
Who hunger for justice and thirst for peace
Their delight is in the love of God

They are like the trees grown in flowing streams
Their leaves will not wither, their fruits are very sweet
In all that they do they will flourish and thrive
Their delight is in the love of God
O blessed are the ones who speak with grace
Their delight is in the love of God
Who stand for what is true and right
Their delight is in the love of God
They are like the trees grown in flowing streams
Their leaves will not wither, their fruits are very sweet
In all that they do they will flourish and thrive
Their delight is in the love of God

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Patrick Reyes

In many ways, the wisdom and spirit of my ancestors live in my very bones. . . To cultivate your intuition, *slow down*. . . It was in (my grandmother's) ability to slow us down and draw on the deep ancestral wisdom she carried in her very body. Intuition is not another form of problem solving. It draws on the love that threads its way through generations.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING SONG: May What I Do

May what I do flow from me like a river.
May what I do flow from me like a river.

CLOSING BLESSING

Blessing for Becoming Wise and Well

We dream the dreams of old,
the longings of our ancestors
arising in the surrender of the night.
Each choice we make to love,
each moment of kindness ripples across time,
each speaking of truth brings integrity,
each moment we live into a new way of being
and witness to something different as possible,
we become the world we want to see,
we carry forward the desires of the ancients
for peace and ease and joy.
This blessing comes as a call,

to release the hold of old compulsions
and what depletes and destroys,
to nourish yourself with exquisite care,
a reminder that the ancestors ache for this,
to bring your ancient birthright into fullness.
May the grandmothers and grandfathers
bless you with clarity and alignment
to bring your gifts in service
to a torn and trembling world.
To do these things with intention
is to elevate their memory with honor.
This blessing comes as a dedication,
for love to disrupt all the wounded patterns,
for you to remember where you came from,
but also the place you are
and who you are becoming.
Learn the names of trees and stones,
of flowers and birdsong.
Be a loving guardian of the land beneath your feet
let your home become a bearer of stories
to leave for the future waiting to be born.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: *Cypress Seed Song* written by [Betsey Beckman](#), sung by [Te Martin](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Saints and Ancestors](#)

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *BánChnoic Eirann O*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2022, from the forthcoming album [May We Rise](#)

Reading of the Night: [Patrick B. Reyes](#), [The Purpose Gap: Empowering Communities of Color to Find Meaning and Thrive](#). Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press (2021) page 156 and 164.

Closing Song: [May What I Do](#) by [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Singing with Monks and Mystics](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (used with permission from Ave Maria Press)

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Day Seven: Morning

Ancestral Earth and Deep Time

OPENING PRAYER

We are descended from thousands of generations of people, but also from the beasts and birds, the mountains and forests, the seas and sky. This morning we remember that we are of this Earth, kindred with everything alive. Ancient One, remind us of this thread we carry within, weaving us together with all that is and ever was. Help us continue to walk in beauty.

OPENING SONG: Let the Land Sing

Where are we going to?

Where did we come from?

What does it mean to all be bones under the same ol' sun?

I've always been, always been right here...

Refrain: So let the land sing through you,

Like the rolling holy.

Let the land sing through you,

Like the rolling holy.

Trees my lungs, mist my breath,

That moon is blooming in my chest.

Courage, my love, your roots grow deep,

Down deep.

Scrambled stardust and mud

make up my own bones and blood

I've always been, always been right here...

Refrain

And then they came with their torches and their guns,

And so my friends gathered one by one by one by one.

I asked the spider how she weaves her web,

And she replied my dear, "Thread by thread by thread by thread."

Like ancestors with songs in their packs,

And they became us track by track by track by...

What is the mud that made you?

I love the mud that made you.

What is the mud that made you?

Refrain 2xs

FIRST READING: Thich Nhat Hanh

Each time my feet touched the earth I knew my mother was there with me. I knew this body was not mine alone but a living continuation of my mother and my father and my grandparents and great-grandparents. Of all my ancestors. These feet that I saw as 'my' feet were actually 'our' feet. Together my mother and I were leaving footprints in the damp soil.

From that moment on, the idea that I had lost my mother no longer existed. All I had to do was look at the palm of my hand, feel the breeze on my face or the earth under my feet to remember that my mother is always with me, available at any time. . . Pay attention to all the leaves, the flowers, the birds, and the dewdrops. If you can stop and look deeply, you will be able to recognize your beloved one manifesting again and again in many forms.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Beauty, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 148, 149, 150: May We Rise

Alleluia, praise our Maker

Alleluia, one and all

May God fill our lives with pleasures

May we rise and never fall

Gather round and sing together

All God's people, where you are

Sun and moon and stars about you

Heaven and earth will praise our God

Alleluia, praise our Maker

Alleluia, one and all

May God fill our lives with pleasures

May we rise and never fall

Play your pipes and play your whistle

Play your harp and string and drum

Raise your voice with grateful singing

Every breath shall praise our God
Alleluia, praise our Maker
Alleluia, one and all
May God fill our lives with pleasures
May we rise and never fall
From the depths and from the heavens
Fiery storms and bitter snows
All creation will adore you
You are God forevermore
Alleluia, praise our Maker
Alleluia, one and all
May God fill our lives with pleasures
May we rise and never fall
Sing a new song with thanksgiving
To the God who's with us now
Praise our God with joy and dancing
For God loves us, one and all
Alleluia, praise our Maker
Alleluia, one and all
May God fill our lives with pleasures
May we rise and never fall
May we rise and never fall

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: Job 38:4-7

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
Tell me, if you have understanding.
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
On what were its bases sunk,
or who laid its cornerstone
when the morning stars sang together
and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

God in and of All, a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay says, "I can push the grass apart, and lay my finger on thy heart." How beautiful it is to find you both in the dark earth, and in the

dark matter of the universe. How excellent to know that you are in all things, and I am in you. I praise you for your magnificence, on earth and in the heavens.

Sung Response O God of Love, you shimmer in the stones.

You Who Shimmers, when you said love one another, you meant for us to love each other without exception. None are excluded from your love, therefore we must love without exception, including those we don't like. We must love those whose ideologies differ from ours, those whose lifestyles we don't understand, and whose behavior we don't approve of. If we can know you are All in All, help us to see the shimmer in each other and all beings, even when the shine is dull to our eyes.

Sung Response O God of Love, you shimmer in the stones.

Ancient Spirit, we are the dream of the ancestors. We are the ones they waited for. What opportunities are available to me that they were denied? A world of knowledge is at my fingertips. The old ways reimagined with technology and hindsight are available to me. It seems too much at times. Despite the many gifts we have available to us, we have made a mess of things. We have injured the planet, our animal and plant kin, and ourselves. Most of all we need to love each other and recognize we are all connected, and bring your healing grace.

Sung Response O God of Love, you shimmer in the stones.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response O God of Love, you shimmer in the stones.

CLOSING SONG: Now I Walk in Beauty (Diné Navajo Prayer)

Now I walk in beauty
Beauty is before me
Beauty is behind me
Above and below me.

CLOSING BLESSING

A Blessing for Deep Time

This blessing shimmers across the ages,
from the ancestors of stone and stars
there is a sacred thread connecting us
to the first moments of everything.

Millions of years
of unfolding, shaping, emerging, adapting,
you are made from the embers of galaxies.

Limestone holds remains of ancient seabeds,
fossils embedded in stones beneath us.

You are part of the Earth lineage,
your body an ecosystem of ancestors
forming a web of ancient life.

See your loved ones
still speak in leaf and loam,
in gills and granite,
in water and on the uplift of wings.

This blessing is an anchor in eternity,
in the ancient wisdom arising
from everything that is alive,
primordial fire pulsing through us,
the origin of love.

SUNG AMEN



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Opening Song: *Let the Land Sing* by [Lydia Violet](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

First Reading: Thich Nhat Hanh, *No Death, No Fear: Comforting Wisdom for Life*. Riverhead Books (2002) page 4-5.

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Day Seven: Evening

The Love of Thousands

OPENING PRAYER

We call upon the Beloved, the angels, saints, and ancestors to ground us each day in their expansive love. This love of thousands embraces us, uplifts us, guides us, and consoles us on the many paths we travel. We celebrate our own holiness and the holiness of all we encounter, knowing Love calls us into the great dance.

OPENING SONG: Holy Holy Holy

We are holy, holy, holy,
We are holy, holy, holy,
We are holy, holy, holy,
We are whole.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Beauty, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 136: God's Love Endures

Give thanks unto the God of gods
God's love endures forever
Give thanks unto the Lord of lords
God's love endures forever
Who made the sun to rule the day
God's love endures forever
The moon and stars to rule the night
Give thanks to God
The God of heaven
God's love endures forever
Let us thank the Lord, for God is good
God's love endures forever
Who delivered Israel from Pharaoh's hand
God's love endures forever
And led them into the promised land
God's love endures forever
Who remembers us when we're cast down

God's love endures forever
And delivers us from every harm
God's love endures forever
Give thanks to God
The God of heaven
God's love endures forever
Let us thank the Lord, for God is good
God's love endures forever

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: Linda Hogan

Walking, I can almost hear the redwoods beating. And the oceans are above me here, rolling clouds, heavy and dark. It is winter and there is smoke from the fires. It is a world of elemental attention, of all things working together, listening to what speaks in the blood. Whichever road I follow, I walk in the land of many gods, and they love and eat one another. Suddenly all my ancestors are behind me. Be still, they say. Watch and listen. You are the result of the love of thousands.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING SONG: I am Here

I am here waiting for you.
I am here listening for you.
I am here praying for you.
I am here hoping for you.
I am here singing for you.

CLOSING BLESSING

A Blessing of the Love of Thousands

May the Beloved,
whose delight is imprinted on every cell,
let love seize us, shake us, awaken us
to a new world and way of being.
Let this joy open your palms
to say yes to what comes,
to love the world
with all your heart, mind, and soul.
This blessing lifts the veil between worlds,
and attunes you to the presence of the invisible,
so you see the angels, saints, and ancestors

showering their love freely to sustain and inspire you.

May you receive their love notes
in dreams, synchronicities, intuition,
the knowing of the body and heart.

May they reveal the jewels hidden in the wounds
when love opens our tender places.

May they help you remember
you are never alone, but always breathing
with a multitude, a throng of lovers.

Feel their primal force
tethering you to the cord of love
running through generations
Binding you in union to all there is,
all there ever was,
and all that is yet to come.

SUNG AMEN



CREDITS

All songs and texts used with permission

Opening Prayer: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#)

Opening Song: *Holy Holy Holy* by [Karen Drucker](#) from the album [The Love of Thousands: Singing with Angels, Saints, and Ancestors](#)

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology: [Richard Bruxvoort Colligan](#) from the album [Monk in the World: Songs for Contemplative Living](#)

Psalm Version: Tune: *Bold Riley*, Words: [Kiran Young Wimberly](#) © 2018, from the album [Rest in the Shelter](#)

Reading of the Night: Linda Hogan, *Dwellings: A Spiritual History of the Living World*. Simon and Schuster (1996) page 159.

Closing Song: *I Am Here* by [Deirdre Ní Chinnéide](#) from the album [The Soul's Slow Ripening: Songs for Celtic Seekers](#)

Closing Blessing: Written by [Christine Valters Paintner](#) to companion her book [The Love of Thousands : How Angels, Saints, and Ancestors Walk with Us Toward Holiness](#) (Ave Maria Press)

Please note: All of the songs and prayer responses are published on CDs in the Abbey of the Arts collection. In addition, these songs & responses have accompanying gesture prayers and/or dances created by Betsey Beckman that can be found on the corresponding [DVD \(each album has a DVD companion\)](#). Audio and video recordings of the Prayer Cycles are available at [AbbeyoftheArts.com](#).