

Mothing Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Pershore Abbey Iona Evening Prayers

**Welcome and Introduction.**

Leader: Peace to each one who comes in need,  
**All: Peace on each one who comes in joy.**  
Leader: Peace on each one who offers prayers,  
**All: Peace on each one who offers song.**  
Leader: Peace of the Maker, Peace of the son,  
**All: Peace of the Spirit, the Triune One.**

**Song: Loving Spirit. CG 81**

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|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | Loving Spirit, Loving Spirit,<br>you have chosen me to be<br>you have drawn me to your wonder<br>you have set your sign on me               | 2 | Like a mother you enfold me<br>hold my life within your own<br>feed me with your very body<br>form me of your flesh and bone.  |
| 3 | Friend and lover, in your closeness<br>I am known and held and blessed:<br>In your promise is your comfort,<br>In your presence I may rest. | 4 | Loving Spirit, loving Spirit<br>you have chosen me to be,<br>you have drawn me to your wonder<br>You have set your sign on me. |

**Prayer:**

Leader: O God, for your love for us, warm and brooding, which has brought us to birth and opened our eyes to the wonder and beauty of creation,  
**All: We give you thanks.**  
Leader: For your love for us, wild and freeing, which has awakened us to the energy of creation; to the sap that flows, the blood that pulses, the heart that sings.  
**All: We give you thanks.**  
Leader: For your love for us compassionate and patient, which has carried us through our pain, wept beside us in our sin, and waited with us in our confusion.  
**All: We give you thanks.**  
Leader: For your love for us, strong and challenging, which has called us to risk for you, asked for the best in us, and shown us how to serve.  
**All: We give you thanks.**  
Leader: O God we celebrate that your Holy Spirit is present deep within us, and at the heart of life.  
**All: Forgive us when we forget your gift of love made known to us in Jesus, and draw us into your presence.**

**Readings :**

**Sarah - Genesis 21: 1-19**

**Chant: God to enfold you, Christ to uphold you,  
Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight;  
So may God grace you, heal and embrace you,  
Lead you through darkness into the light.**

**Pharaoh's Daughter by Joy Mead. Exodus 2: 1-10**

They are everywhere; small Hebrew children, lifeblood of a people, fertile, fecund, flowing: a river of life she walks beside. The basket: a floating flower, comes towards her on the stream, offering its contents like a promise. Her hands reach out disturbing the glistening flow. Broody birds rise, their wings beating wildly like her startled heart as she draws the baby from the water. Then the girl, her eyes alert from minding, moves to her side, whispering of mother's milk.

While she, childless daughter of Pharaoh, longs to feed honey to another woman's child. The wind off the water caresses her urgency with the coolness of time that is always early and will neither allow her to pass by nor let her claim this abundance as if it were her own. She gives him back to the stream of life; to be nourished in the knowledge and resilience he will need, to survive and lead his people to freedom.

**Chant:**

**Sisera's Mother by Joy Mead . Judges: 19-22; 24-31**

Who does not cast a glance to where the unnamed mother sits silently at the edge of her story. Pondering in her heart the things of his growing, she waits, powerless and voiceless for the hoofbeat of his horses on the soil of home. She watches the dawning: the gradual revealing of vast emptiness, for many share the dying but few the knowing. The rays of the sun pierce her heart and her still body is the shape of a multitude of grieving women; for no one asks the mothers when the talk is of war.

**Chant:**

**Reading from 'Follow me' by Jan Sutch Pickard based on Mark 1; 16-20**

"Go" he said. "let the children be fed first- why should the dogs eat their bread?"  
But I would not be turned away: hoping for healing, hungry for justice, I stood my ground and argued:  
"In God's household even the dogs are fed"  
Seeing my faith, he told me to go home and find my daughter healed.  
"Go", he said - and I did.

**Chant:**

**Mary - Luke 2:4-7**

Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there the time came for her to be delivered and she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger because there was no place for them in the inn.

**Chant:**

**Jesus - John 19: 25-27**

Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, Mary, his aunt, the wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside me, his close friend, he said to her, "He is your son" and to me he said "She is your mother!" and from then on I took her into my home.

**Pause for reflection.**

**Song: 1 There is a line of women  
Extending back to Eve  
Whose role in shaping history  
God only could conceive.  
And though, through endless ages,  
Their witness was repressed,  
God valued and encouraged them  
Through whom the world was blessed.  
So sing a song of Sarah,  
to laughter she gave birth:  
and sing a song of Tamar  
who stood for women's worth;  
and sing a song of Hannah  
who bargained with her Lord;  
and sing a song of Mary  
who bore and bred God's worth.**

**2 There is a line of women  
who took on powerful men  
defying laws and scruples  
To let life live again.  
And though, despite their triumph,  
their stories stayed untold  
God kept their number growing,  
Creative, strong and bold.  
So sing a song of Shiphrah  
with Puah close at hand,  
engaged to kill male children,  
they foiled the king's command.  
And sing a song of Rahab  
who sheltered spies and lied;  
and sing a song of Esther  
preventing genocide.**

3 **There is a line of women who stood by Jesus' side,  
Who housed him while he ministered and held him when he died.  
And though they claimed he'd risen their news was deemed suspect  
Till Jesus stood among them, His womanly elect.  
So sing a song of Anna who saw Christ's infant face;  
And sing a song of Martha who gave him food and space  
And sing of all the Marys who heeded his requests  
And now at heaven's banquet are Jesus' fondest guests.**

**Prayer:**

Leader: On this Mothering Sunday let us bring to our mothering, caring God, our prayers for all those entrusted with the responsibility of caring and motherhood and we give thanks for those who have mothered and cared for us

We pray for mothers the world over awaiting the birth of their child; the anxious, the excited; those who will bear their child alone or without medical help. Those forced into motherhood against their will. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: We pray for mothers who have experienced heartbreak – suffering miscarriage or still birth; those whose children have been injured or killed through accident, assault or as a result of terminal illness. Those whose children have 'disappeared' or are no longer in contact with their families. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: We pray for those who for many reasons are unable or are prevented from having the children they long for. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: We pray for single Mothers and Fathers who have the responsibility of both mothering and fathering and bringing up their children on their own. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: We pray for those who for various reasons have had to give up their children and for those who undertake fostering or adoption. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: We pray for those who have lost their mothers or have never known them at all, and for all for whom this day brings pain rather than pleasure. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: We pray for mothers and carers who struggle to feed their loved ones. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: We pray for those who find it difficult to love their children and those whose experience of being mothered has not been a happy one. Pause

**All: Surround them with your love.**

Leader: Loving, caring, mothering, God, you know what it is to love your children- to watch over them tenderly, anxiously, proudly and constantly. You know what it means, for you have called us your children, and you care deeply for each one of us. Grant to all mothers and carers, your wisdom, guidance and strength in the nurturing and caring of their children and loved ones.  
**Amen**

**Song:**           **He's got the whole world in his hand x 3**  
**He's got the whole world in his hand**

**He's got you and me brother in his hand x 3**  
**He's got the whole world in his hand.**

**He's got you and me sister, in his hand x 3**  
**He's got the whole world in his hand.**

**He's got the tiny little baby, in his hand x 3**  
**He's got the whole world in his hand.**

**He's got everybody here in his hand x 3**  
**He's got the whole world in his hand.**

**Closing Prayers. From; An Invocation of Love – Annie Heppenstall**

**All:**           **God of our brother Jesus,**  
**Your love is the love of a mother**  
**Who adores her children and forgives them everything.**  
**Who is devoted to them and accepts them always.**  
**We are your children.**  
**We fall down and you help us up.**  
**We go wrong and you put us right.**  
**Now, fill our emptiness with your love,**  
**replace our brokenness with wholeness,**  
**and our weakness with your strength,**  
**that we might go out into the world and be of use to you.**

**Blessing:**       **God, who gave birth to all creation, bless us**  
**God, who became incarnate by an earthly mother, bless us.**  
**God, who broods as a mother over children, bless us.**  
**God, bless us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,**  
**Now and forever. Amen**

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**The next Iona Service will be on 24th April @ 5.00pm**