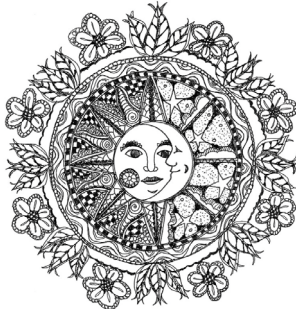


The World is About to Turn

Advent Night Prayer

Adapted from New Zealand Prayer Book
and Benedictine Daily Prayer
Images by Mitchell Bond



(Leader of prayer reads *italicized* text. All read **bold** text.)

CALL TO PRAYER

The angels of God guard us through the night,

and quieten the powers of darkness.

The Spirit of God be our guide

to lead us to peace and to glory.

*It is but lost labor that we haste
to rise up early, and so late take rest,
and eat the bread of anxiety.*

*For those beloved of God are given gifts
even while they sleep.*

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

CONFESSION

*My brothers and sisters, our help
Is in the name of the eternal God*

who is making the heavens and the earth.

*We give thanks for all that is good,
for creation and for our humanity,
for stewardship of the planet entrusted to us,
for the gifts of life and of one another,
for divine love which is unbounded and eternal.
Holy and beloved God, our Companion,
our Guide upon the way, our bright evening star.
We repent the wrongs we have done:*

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

We have wounded your love,

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness,

Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home,

Spirit of God, dwell in us.

*Eternal Spirit, living God, all that we are,
have been, and shall be is known to you,
to the very secret of our hearts and all that rises to trouble us.
Living flame, burn into us, cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may live, love, and praise in deed and in truth.*

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

INVOCATION

*Eternal Spirit, flow through our being
and open our lips,*

that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Together, let us praise the God of love:

PSALM 25

To you, God, we lift up our souls.
O God, in you we trust;
do not let us be put to shame;
do not let our enemies exult over us.

Do not let those who wait for you
be put to shame.

Help us to know your ways,
teach us your paths.
Lead us in your truth and teach us,
for you are the God of our salvation;
for you we wait all night long.

You lead the humble in what is right
and teach the humble your way.
All your paths are steadfast love and faithfulness.
for those who seek justice and peace.

TUESDAY (17th) Epistle of James

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of god.
The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth,
being patient with it until it receives the early and late rains.
You must also be patient. Strengthen your hearts,
for the coming of god is near.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

WEDNESDAY (18th) James Baldwin/The Fire Next Time

Love takes off the masks that we fear we cannot live without
and know we cannot live within. I use the word "love" here not
merely in the personal sense but as a state of being,
or a state of grace - not in the infantile American sense
of being made happy but in the tough and universal sense
of quest and daring and growth.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

THURSDAY (19th) The Prophet Ezekiel

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them
lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring
back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will
strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy,
I will feed them with justice.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

FRIDAY (20th) Shantideva/Embracing Bodhicitta

Just as all the Buddhas of the past have brought forth the
awakened mind, and in the precepts of the Bodhisattvas
step-by-step abode and trained, likewise, for the benefit of all
beings, I will bring to birth the awakened mind, and in those
precepts, step-by-step, I will abide and train myself.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

SATURDAY (21st) Toyokiho Kagawa
Early 20th Century Labor Organizer

Therefore I do not lose hope, nor do I fear when I see this drought in the land. I shall dig down deeper, still deeper into my own soul. I shall dig down to the God who is within me. Then, if I strike the underground stream that murmurs softly in the depths of my heart, I will tenderly cherish this oasis of the soul; and to it will I lead a few thirsting comrades.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

SUNDAY (22nd) Dorothy Day

What we would like to do is change the world? Make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And to a certain extent, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, of the poor, of the destitute, the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor in other words, we can to a certain extent change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

MONDAY (23rd) Paul's Letter to the Romans

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to awake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE

PRAYERS FOR THE COMMUNITY

For whom shall we pray this evening...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*May these intercessions unite our hearts
to the people and places we have named tonight
as we join together in this ancient rhythm of prayer:*

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker,
Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, In whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo
through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed
by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done
by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb
from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the
power that is love,
now and for ever. Amen.

*Be present, Spirit of God, within us,
your dwelling place and home,
that this gathering may be one where
all darkness is penetrated by your light,
all troubles calmed by your peace,
all evil redeemed by your love,
all pain transformed in your suffering,
and all dying glorified in your risen life.*

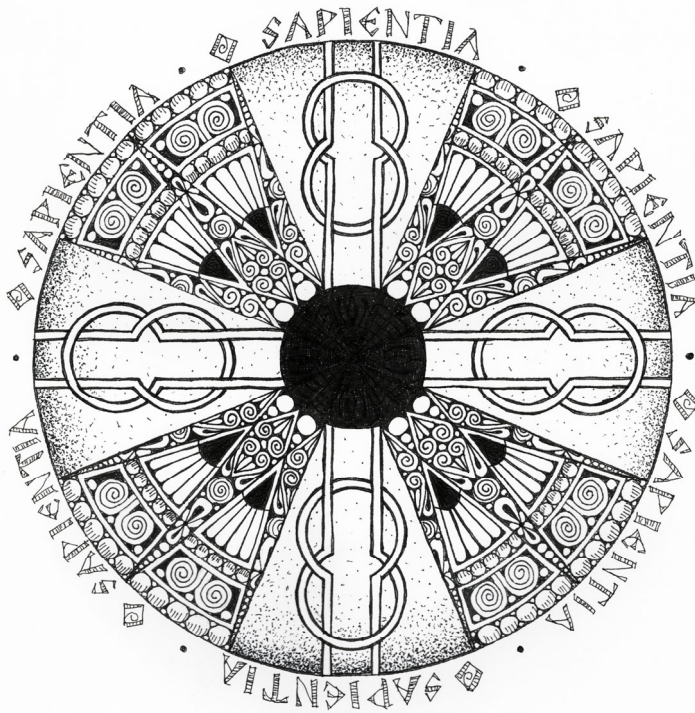
Amen.

TUESDAY, December 17th

True light, enlightening everyone who comes into the world,

**come and shatter the darkness of our ignorance,
bring low the mountains of our pride,
and raise up the valleys of our weakness,
break down the walls of hatred among the nations,
and make smooth the ways that lead to peace**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE



*O Wisdom of God,
forming all beings with compassion and love,
come return your people to the path of knowledge.*

MAGNIFICAT

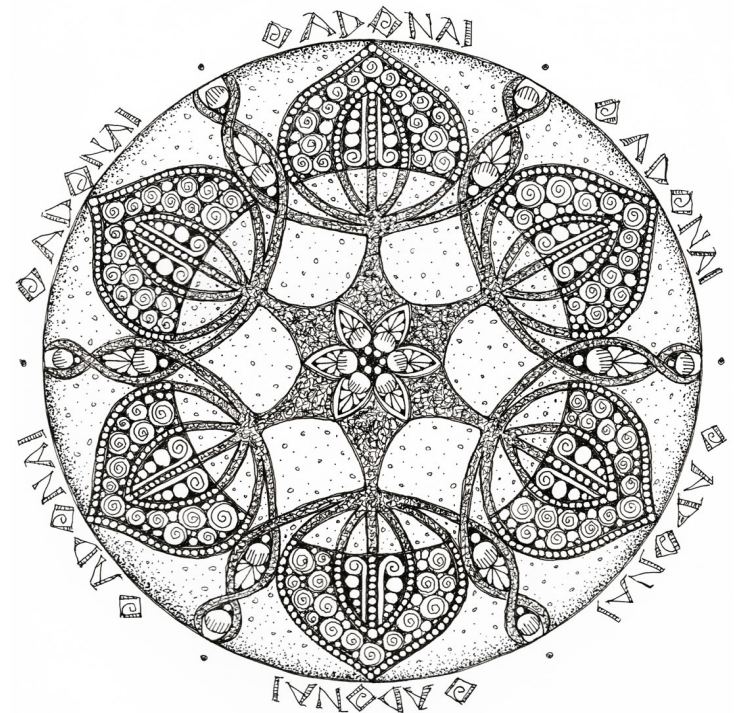
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WEDNESDAY, December 18th

True light, enlightening everyone who comes into the world,

**come and shatter the darkness of our ignorance,
bring low the mountains of our pride,
raise up the valleys of our weakness,
break down the walls of hatred among the nations,
and make smooth the ways that lead to peace**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE



*O Eternal Fire,
giver of the law to Moses at Sinai,
come set all hearts aflame for justice.*

MAGNIFICAT

(on page 14)

THURSDAY, December 19th

True light, enlightening everyone who comes into the world,

**come and shatter the darkness of our ignorance,
bring low the mountains of our pride,
raise up the valleys of our weakness,
break down the walls of hatred among the nations,
and make smooth the ways that lead to peace**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE



*O Root of Jesse's Stem,
sign of God's love for all people,
come bring new life without delay.*

MAGNIFICAT

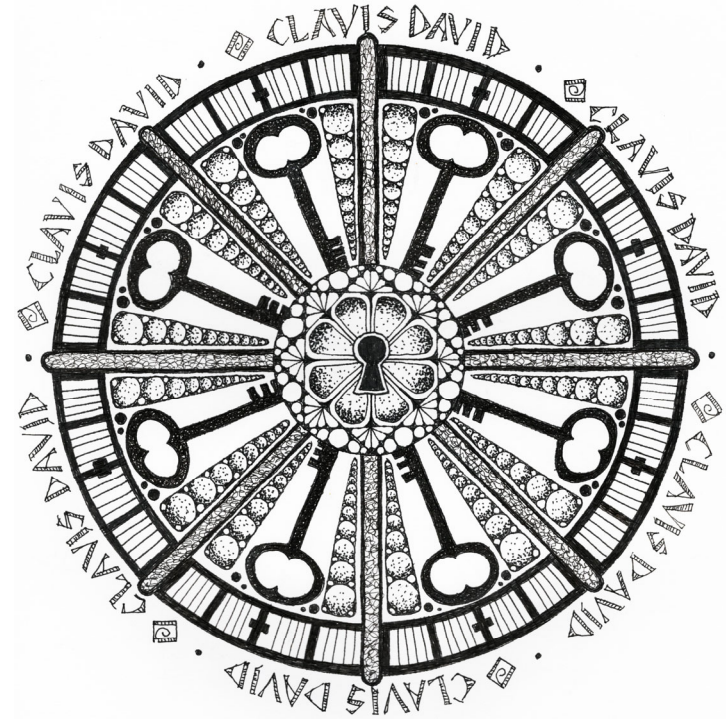
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FRIDAY, December 20th

True light, enlightening everyone who comes into the world,

**come and shatter the darkness of our ignorance,
bring low the mountains of our pride,
raise up the valleys of our weakness,
break down the walls of hatred among the nations,
and make smooth the ways that lead to peace**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE



*O Key of David,
opening the gates to all creation,
come free the prisoners of darkness.*

MAGNIFICAT

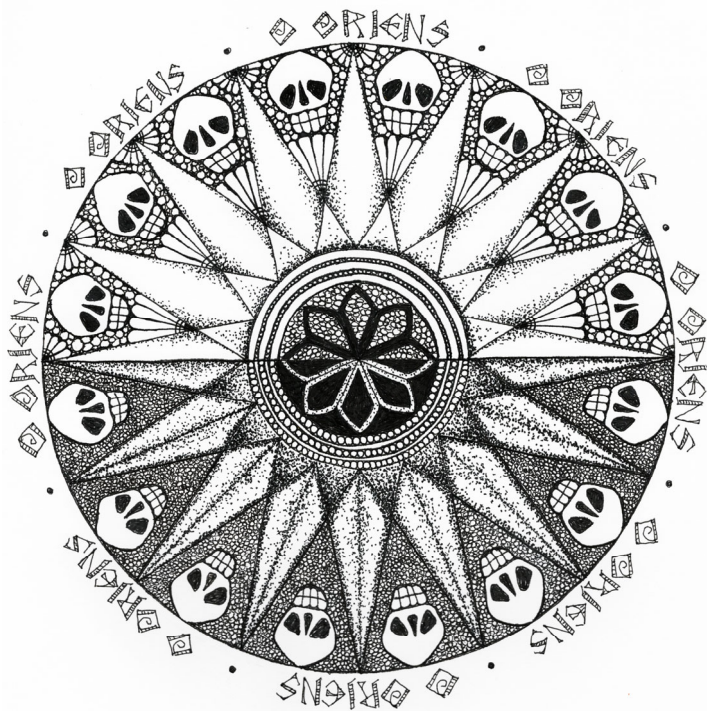
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SATURDAY, December 21st

True light, enlightening everyone who comes into the world,

**come and shatter the darkness of our ignorance,
bring low the mountains of our pride,
raise up the valleys of our weakness,
break down the walls of hatred among the nations,
and make smooth the ways that lead to peace**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE



*O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal light, sun of justice,
come and shine on all who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death.*

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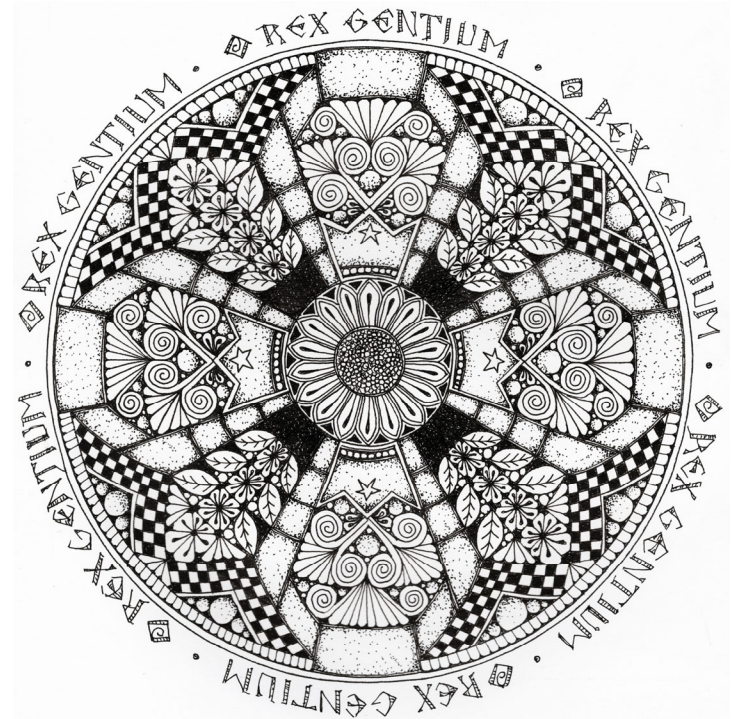
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SUNDAY, December 22nd

True light, enlightening everyone who comes into the world,

**come and shatter the darkness of our ignorance,
bring low the mountains of our pride,
raise up the valleys of our weakness
break down the walls of hatred among the nations,
and make smooth the ways that lead to peace**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE



*O Desire of Nations,
fulfillment of their longing and keystone of creation,
come unite all those whom you have formed from the dust.*

MAGNIFICAT

(on page 14)

MONDAY, December 23rd

True light, enlightening everyone who comes into the world,

**come and shatter the darkness of our ignorance,
bring low the mountains of our pride,
raise up the valleys of our weakness,
break down the walls of hatred among the nations,
and make smooth the ways that lead to peace**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE



*O Emmanuel,
god present amidst and within,
come teach your people to listen and live
the way of justice and mercy.*

MAGNIFICAT

(on page 14)

MAGNIFICAT

**My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in my Savior
who has looked on my lowliness with favor
and all people will call me blessed.**

**God's mercy is for those who fear the Lord
from generation to generation.
The Lord has shown strength,
and has scattered the proud
In the thoughts of their hearts.**

**The Lord brings down the powerful.
The Lord lifts up the lowly.
The Lord fills the hungry with good things
and sends the rich away with nothing.**

**The Lord has helped Israel,
remembering all of God's mercy.
Remembering the promise made to Abraham,
and to all those who follow.**

DEPART IN SILENCE

SOME THOUGHTS ON ADVENT NIGHT PRAYER

A god or deity inserting themselves into history can be found across all religious traditions. Over time, encounters with the divine are commemorated in festivals, holy days, hymns/chants, and formalized in rituals. Since such encounters are better expressed in poetry than prose, these observances are some of the most profound works of the creative imagination ... deep and multivalent. The postures, metaphors, stories, symbols, movements, and vocalizations all come together to literally make present the gifts and graces of that past event ... god with us. These spiritual practices build and strengthen religious and cultural identity markers. They shape who we are, how others see us, and how we invest ourselves in the world around us.

But spiritual practices seldom remain static. They evolve alongside human migration, language, culture, and conflict. At Portiuncula Guild we intentionally nudge this evolution by creatively adapting ancient spiritual practices to inform and inspire healing and reconciliation in our fractured world . We seek to find common ground across faith traditions, and we place these spiritual practices amid conversation and food to engage the bigger questions of our day.

With that said, we acknowledge two discordant realities in the monastic spiritual practice of Advent Night Prayer when prayed in our current situation. First, the Hebrew texts and prophetic voices that dominate the season can be very awkward language considering the current war in the Middle East and a violence and aggression rooted in claims to ancestral lands and divine promises. Second, the Christian triumphalism that forms the basic structure of this spiritual practice is often manipulated in the twisted rhetoric and bigotry of White Christian Nationalism. The legacy of Judeo/Christian encounters with the divine was and continues to be utilized in service of systems of power and dominance.

We believe all great art (liturgy, music, storytelling, dance, and poetry) can provide truth and beauty and insight even in these discordant tensions of ancient spiritual practices. Remember, all spiritual practice evolves to better serve the gathered community. Portiuncula Guild is committed to “workshopping” imaginative spiritual practices to discover if these ancient practices can still inform and inspire the reconciliation our world so desperately needs. At it’s core, the “incarnation” of the deity into human history has been an attempt to remind/restore humanity to the fullness of our potential, as well as to remind/restore our interconnectedness to each other and all of creation.

Join Night Prayer
nightly at 8:00 pm
December 17-23, 2024
on Zoom

Links at www.portiunculaguild.org/night-prayer



The Portiuncula Guild Planning Team meets regularly.
All are welcome to help shape futures events and gatherings.