

# Christmas Triduum



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# God itself is the Dance



## DAY 1

We start our prayer blessing ourselves with the Trinitarian ritual: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### *Introduction:*

On the first day of our Triduum we are invited to reflect and pray on the Mystery of the Trinity as a Community, as Friendship and as a Dance.

The Trinity is a community of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit who are deeply and intimately connected to one another in love and mutuality - a Circle of Dance. And God is not just a dancer, God is the dance itself.

In and through Jesus we are invited to see ourselves as participants at the banquet and a partner in God's eternal dance of love and communion. The divine dance isn't closed circle, we are invited!

### *Opening song:*

*Choose an appropriate song for the theme*



# Psalm Prayer

TO BE PRAYED IN 2 CHOIRS



## 1. *Dancing God*

Dancing God, passionate leap of creative energy  
skipping among the stars waltzing on rivers birthing a universe.

Dancing God, tumbling from somewhere into Jewish territory  
whirling Spirit seeding Mary's womb with alluring divinity.

Dancing God, uncontainable grandeur kicking and rolling in Mary's flesh  
while untamed cousin echoes the dance in aunt Elizabeth.

Dancing God, spark of angel's song shepherds hurrying like whirling  
dervishes gasping in awe at a surprising child.

Dancing God, still passionate today dynamic movement of love wooing  
our hearts toward oneness and peace in a tear-stained world.

Dance on, passionate God, we are your dance now teach us the tune  
show us the steps it is Christmas it is time to dance. (*Joyce Rupp*)

### **We give glory to the Triune God as we pray:**

Glory to you God our Creator, Breathe into us new life, new meaning.

Glory to you God our Savior, lead us into the way of peace and justice.

Glory to you Healing Spirit, empower us to transform the world with  
your compassion.

## 2. Canticle of Love

*(A paraphrase of Rule 13, Ch. 1  
of the SSPS Constitution of 1891)*

If I don't ardently desire love, if I  
don't remove the obstacles that  
hinder love.

If I don't endeavor to act through motives rather than of reward  
I cannot be a servant of eternal Love.

Love is sustained by sacrifices offered in the service of love, it seeks  
generous hearts in which to establish the kingdom of Divine Love.  
It is the oneness of the love of God and of humans.

Love makes us rich

Love enables us to persevere in all difficulties and sufferings;

Love is a staff and powerful support on the hazardous ways of life.

Love enlightens and guides us when differences of opinions  
would be obstacles to unity.

Love gives us patience to endure what cannot be changed;

Love reveals itself not so much on pious feelings as in motives and deeds.

Love waits attentively for the call of the Beloved and endeavors to answer it.

### Reading:

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father so how can you say  
‘Show us the Father?’ Do you believe that I am in the Father and the  
Father is in me? What I say to you I do not speak of my own accord: it is  
my Father, living in me who is doing his work. You must believe when I  
say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me...” (Jn 14:9-13).

“I love you just as the Father loved me, remain in my love...” (Jn 15:9).

*Notice what happens to your own desire to love as you become more  
aware of the God's love for you and God's invitation to be a partner in  
the dance of compassion...*

*Short pause for silent reflection followed by group sharing.*



## Intercessory prayers

*In our prayer we address the four directions remembering how the Spirit resides there and how all of us are united as one.*

*In each of the four directions place various colors or anything symbolic of people who dwell in each of the four directions of the earth.*

*For the voices: various readers alternate as the voice of the people and the whole community responds “We are one”.*

# We are One

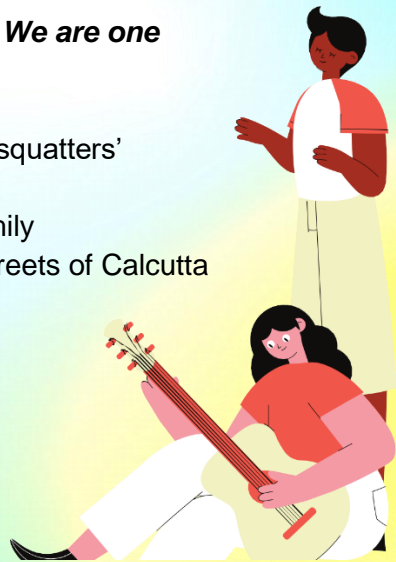
Prayer from the Four Directions. Adapted from the tradition of the native Americans.

**East** - *All the sisters face the East*

- I am the people of the East - **R. We are one**
- I am the Chinese merchant
- I am the woman of Iran
- I am the family who lives in the squatters' area in the Philippines
- I am the Vietnamese fishing family
- I am the forgotten one on the streets of Calcutta
- I am the Tibetan Buddhist nun
- I am your sister
- I am your brother

**(Short pause and you can add other voices that come to you)**

**Prayer** *(This prayer follows after the voices of each direction)*





O Triune God, we join our minds and hearts with the people of our planet Earth. We recognize the deep bond that we have with all Creation. We rejoice in your Sacred Presence among us and within us.

Divine Oneness, we celebrate the goodness, the beauty, the talents, and the spirituality of all these sisters and brothers of ours. We stand in solidarity with all those who suffer in any way. Rekindle our love, revitalize our compassion, and renew our awareness of the unity we share with you and all beings.

### *South – All the sisters face the South*

- I am the people of the South - **R. We are one**
- I am the weavers of colorful cloth in South America
- I am the singers and dancers of Haiti
- I am the surviving bush-people of the Kalahari desert
- I am the factory worker in Mexico
- I am the mother of the disappeared in Central America
- I am the orphanage director in Africa
- I am the aboriginal children playing in Australia
- I am your sister
- I am your brother

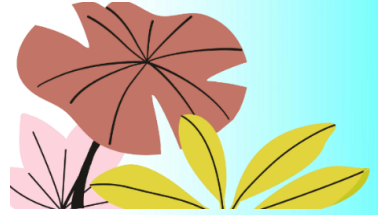
### *Prayer as above*

### *West – All the sisters face the West*

- I am the people of the West - **R. We are one**
- I am the winemaker in the Mediterranean
- I am the housewife in Poland
- I am the rancher in unfenced lands
- I am the widow in Ukraine
- I am the peacekeeper in war-torn lands
- I am your sister
- I am your brother



## Prayer as above



*North* – All the sisters face the North

- I am the people of the North - **R. We are one**
- I am the teacher in Vancouver
- I am the European immigrant
- I am the Huron native organizing for justice
- I am the oil worker of Alaska
- I am the waitress in rural café
- I am your sister
- I am your brother

## Prayer as above

*We conclude our prayer by praying the  
Our Father with joined hands.*





# The Word in the World



## DAY 2

We begin our prayer in the Name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

### *Introduction:*

St. Therese of Lisieux once said that “A God who became so small could only be mercy and love”. As the “Word made flesh”, Jesus is the greatest symbol of the Father’s love for us. The fact that he would come to earth as a little, helpless baby, reveals the immensity of His love for us. God desires that all people including creation know the great love that He has for us. As the Son of God, Christ came so that we, in turn, may become Sons and Daughters of God. He wanted us to participate in the Trinitarian dance of life.

Today on the second day of our Triduum, we take some time to reflect on this beautiful mystery of the Incarnation. During this time of giving, let us become conscious of the ultimate gift that God has given us in sending His Son into the world to redeem us, to show us His great love, and to empower us to become witnesses and active participants in the dance of love and compassion.

*Opening song: any Christmas song*

# Psalm Prayer

TO BE PRAYED IN 2 CHOIRS



## *1. And the Word became flesh and lived among us*

*(John 1: 14a)*

The Word became the hungry child with empty eyes and swollen belly. We are his/her hope that one day her/his belly will be filled with good things and the rich sent away empty.

**Response: *Father, give us grace to see and faith to respond***

The Word became the poor who live amongst the garbage the rich throw away. We are their hope that one day justice will prevail and equality will be born. **R.**

The Word became the war widow fleeing her savaged country with six children and six plastic bags. We are her hope that one day the mighty will be put down from their thrones and her home will be rebuilt. **R**

The Word became the skeletal man, wracked by AIDS and shunned by all. We are his hope that one day treatment will be given and he will be understood. **R**

The Word became the young girl prostituting her body to keep her baby alive. We are her hope that one day the good news of great joy will mean she can feed and clothe her child. **R**

The Word became the orphan boy, bewildered and confused. We are his hope that one day war will be no more and peace will be won specially in Ukraine and Russia. **R**

*(Annabel Shilsonthomas)*

## 2. Lord of the Dance (Shaker Song)

**Refrain:** “Dance, then wherever you may be. I am the Lord of the Dance” said he: “I’ll lead you all wherever you may be, I will lead you all in the dance” said he.

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,  
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun.  
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,  
at Bethlehem I had my birth. **(refrain)**

I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,  
but they would not dance and they wouldn’t follow me;  
I dance for the fishermen, for James and for John;  
they came with me and the dance went on. **(refrain)**

I dance on the Sabbath and I cured the lame,  
the holy people, they said it was a shame.  
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high  
And they left me there on a cross to die  
But I am the dance and I’d still go on. **(refrain)**

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black;  
It’s hard to dance with the devil on your back.  
They buried my body and they thought I’d gone  
But I am the dance and I still go on. **(refrain)**

They cut me down and I leapt up high,  
I am the life that will never die.  
I’ll live in you and if you live in me;  
I am the Lord of the dance said he. . **(refrain)**



## Reading:

God is in us, because we are in Christ. As members of the mystical body, Christians actually participate in the divine nature of the Trinity. We do not merely watch the dance, we dance the dance. We join hands with Christ and the Spirit flows through us and between us and our feet move always in the loving embrace of the Father. In that we are members of the mystical body of Christ, we see the joyful love of the Father through the eyes of the Son. And with every breath, we breathe the Holy Spirit.

*(Carl McColman)*

How am I challenged in my life as well as in my work to follow Jesus and be his partner in the dance of love and compassion?

*(Pause for 3-5 minutes for silent reflection followed by group sharing.)*

## Intercessory prayers

Let us bring all our needs and concerns, the concerns of our country and the world to the Father in Jesus through the Spirit'.

**Our response: *Loving God, hear our prayer***

Christ, for whom there was no room in the inn, give courage to all who are homeless, those who live in abject poverty, we pray. **R.**

Christ, who fled into Egypt as refugee, give comfort to all the refugees especially the elderly the women, and children, we pray. **R.**

Christ as we contemplate the wonder of your birth, stir in us the desire to cradle those who have nowhere to lay their head – the migrants, the labourers, the unemployed so that together we may shake the boat of injustice done to them. Kindle our hearts to embrace the rejected and dispossessed. We pray. **R.**



Christ you are everything to all who came in contact with you. Make us sensitive to the people around us and may we be the eyes of the blind, the strength of the weak and the friend of the lonely. We pray:

***Loving God, hear our prayer***

Christ you are the Prince of Peace, may our celebration of your birth bring peace to every human heart and to all countries confronted by war and conflicts. We pray: **R.**

Christ Jesus through you God becomes a vital part of an ecosystem and a part of the interconnected system that support life on Earth, enlighten us especially those who possess power and money that we may work together to protect life and to prepare for a better future for the coming of your kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty. We pray: **R.**

***Short pause to pray for personal and community intentions.***

***Let us conclude our prayer with the Lord's Prayer... Our Father who are in the heaven...***

## ***Closing prayer***

O Sacred Spirit, O Divine Breath of Life, open our hearts and our whole being to sing in harmony with the creation's many voices.

Help us to unite with your first Word made flesh – your creation that we may be able to unravel the wondrous words of your final Word made flesh – Jesus through Whom, with Whom and in Whom we may see ourselves as another Word of Yours made flesh to give your honor and glory.

Amen

## ***Closing Song***

*(The community is free to choose any appropriate song to end the prayer).*



# The Holy Spirit: Weaver of inclusive, intercultural relationships



## DAY 3

“Living in a religious missionary community, we endeavor to make the presence of the Divine Love visible in our life and activity. As a community of sisters of different nations and languages, we become a living symbol of the unity and diversity of the Church” (*SSpS Prologue*).

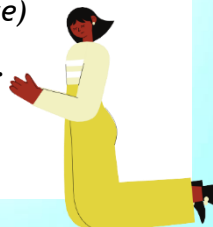
“It is the Spirit in history that seems to be driving us forward, not giving up on us—God within and in the spaces between” (*Richard Rohr*).

### *Invitation to silence and prayer*

Come into a space of quiet. Become present to our ever-present God. Become aware of your breath. The very act of breathing is an expression of the presence of God, who sustains our lives in this moment and every moment. As you sit in the quiet, notice how you experience the Spirit residing in you. Where in your body do you come to know the active presence of God? In your heart? Your mind? Your gut? Be aware of this truth: God lives in us by the Spirit, here, now. (*short pause*)

Let us call on the Spirit to pray in us and through us.

***Song to the Holy Spirit***



# Psalm Prayer

TO BE PRAYED IN 2 CHOIRS



## 1. *Psalm of Spirit*

Come, Holy Spirit, rattle the rooms in which we are hiding.  
Shake the tired foundations until the institutions crumble.  
Break the rules that keep you out of all our Sacred spaces,  
then lift from the dust and rubble a completely new creation.

Come, Holy Spirit, enter our lives, whisper our names  
And scatter your gifts of grace.  
With wild abandon, give your silent strength to all imprisoned  
by the structures.  
And let your raging fire be a sign of liberty.

Come Holy Spirit, help us to find ourselves in vital places,  
bringing Your Word of freedom to the poor and the oppressed.  
We will remember, women were there when you burst upon  
a waiting world.  
Creating and recreating opportunities for everyone to feel  
and fear your face. *(T. Winter)*

## 2. *A Prayer to the Holy Spirit*

Holy Spirit, Power and Passion of our life, touch our hearts with your  
profound love. Move through the fragments of our days and enable us to  
sense your fiery Presence in all circumstances and situations.

Holy Spirit source of Vision and our Perceptive Guide, permeate the  
moments of our choices especially when we are confronted with  
falsehood. We ask you to turn us toward the way of goodness, so that we  
will always lean toward your love.

Spirit! Blessing for the heart grown weary, encircle us with your loving energy and empower us with your gentleness. Deepen our faith in your love and dynamism which strengthens the people who have gone weak and tired.

Spirit! Breath of Life, touch of mystery, you are the ribbon of inner connection, uniting me with the groaning of all creation. Because of you, my life gathers into a oneness. Keep me attentive to this interdependence. Fill my being with a constant compassion and a deep hope that knows no bounds.

Spirit! Dwelling Place, you are the home for which we deeply yearn. You are the resting place for which we long. Grant that we may keep our whole self-open to the transforming power of your indwelling, that we may ever know the blessing of your tremendous companionship. (*Joyce Rupp*)

## Reading

Our principle of unity is the Holy Spirit. He reminds us that first of all we are God's beloved children; all equal, in this respect, and all different. The Spirit comes to us, in our differences and difficulties, to tell us that we have one Lord – Jesus – and one Father, and that for this reason we are brothers and sisters! Let us begin anew from here

"The Holy Spirit, gift of the Risen Jesus, conveys divine life to us and thus lets us enter into the dynamism of the Trinity, which is a dynamism of love, of communion, of mutual service, of sharing. A person who loves others for the very joy of love is a reflection of the Trinity.

A family in which each person loves and helps one another is a reflection of the Trinity.  
A parish in which each person loves and shares spiritual and material effects is a reflection of the Trinity".  
(*Pope Francis*)





What daily choices do I make that foster my respect and compassion for the humanity of others?

*(Short pause followed by sharing)*

## **Intercessions:**

**Response: *Spirit, God of cultures, hear and heal us!***

- Create in us a heart that feels deep gratitude for our origin, life situations, nationality and cultural heritage. **Response.**
- When we are overwhelmed with the feeling that my culture is superior to the other and my opinion is better than the other. **R**
- When our negative thoughts of others keep preventing us from being compassionate and understanding. **R**
- In our tendency to be right and insist to prove that others are wrong. **R**
- When our cultural prejudices overshadow us and we succumb to being judgmental instead of being sensitive and appreciative of other cultural values. **R**

## **Closing prayer**

Compassionate Trinity we pray for the grace to tear down walls that divide us and build bridges of understanding and unity.

We praise you God for the gift of cultural diversity in our world. Help us to listen more deeply and



connect with others who may have a different perspective and background.

May your Spirit guide us to listen and to see the beauty in diversity.

Valuing our interculturality may we witness to your Love and Compassion in our day to day life and relationships.

## *Closing Song*

*(The community choose any appropriate song).*

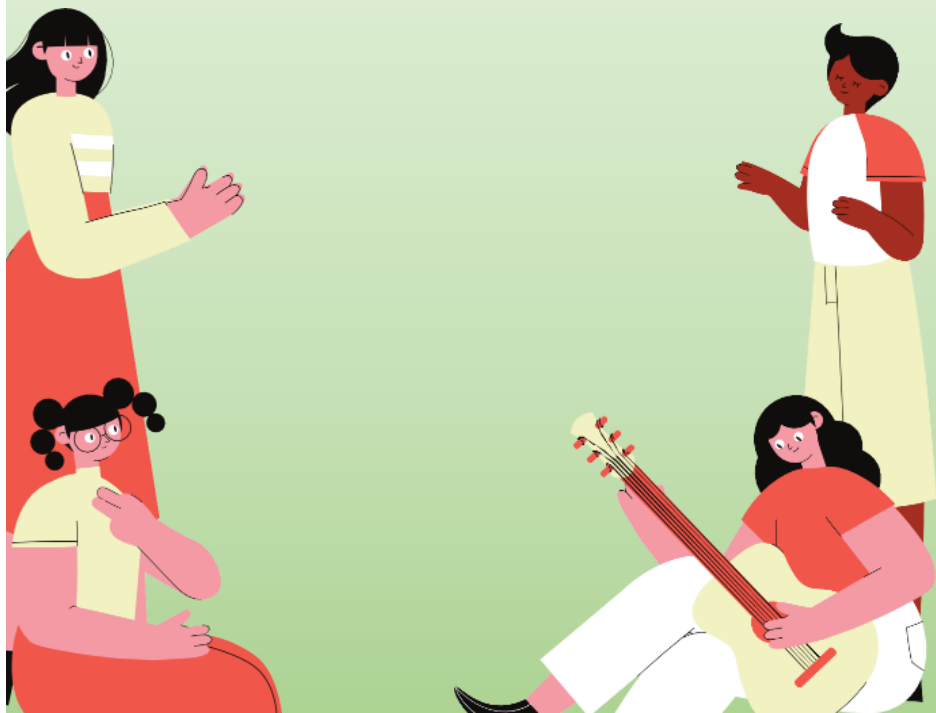


## *Environment- suggestions*

**Day 1** – *Arrange the chairs in a circular form. Place a picture of the Dancing Trinity, 4 candles to be lighted as you pray for each direction. If possible place also some colored cloths representing the people in the 4 directions.*

**Day 2** – *Place the baby Jesus at the center*

**Day 3** – *a woven material to symbolize interculturality*





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