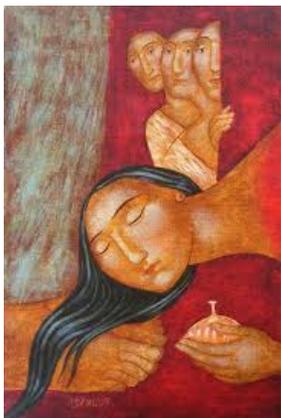


# Anointing at Bethany Ceremony



*You will need a small amount of oil, if available.*

## Entrance

Music plays: “*Now the green blade rises...*”

Reading: John 12:26

*Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains a single grain, but if it dies, it shall yield a rich harvest.*

## Invocation of the Mystical Garden Of Love

Reading: Hafez

*How did the rose ever open its heart and give to this world all of its beauty?  
It felt the encouragement of light against its being -  
otherwise, we all remain too frightened.*

Chant “*Slowly blooms the rose within*”(x7)

Recitation by “Mary Magdalene”: Song of Songs: 2:1; 1:2; 6:3

*I am the rose of Sharon,  
I am the lily of the valley...  
Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth;  
truly more pleasing is he than wine.  
I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.*

Chant: “*Slowly blooms the rose within*” ( x7)

Recitation by “Jesus” : Song of Songs 4:12, 16; 5:1

*You are a garden enclosed, my sister, my bride;  
a garden enclosed; a fountain sealed...  
a garden fountain,  
a well of fresh water,  
flowing from Lebanon.*

*Arise, north wind,  
and come, south wind!*

*Blow upon my garden that its spices may flow  
I have come to my garden, my sister, bride,  
I gather my myrrh with my spices.*

Chant: *“Slowly blooms the rose within”* (x 7)

Recitation by “Mary Magdalene”: Song 8: 6-7

*Place me as a seal upon your heart,  
For love is as strong as death,  
its ardor as unyielding as the grave.  
It burns like a blazing fire,  
Like a mighty flame.  
Many waters cannot quench love.  
Rivers cannot wash it away.*

Chant: *“Slowly Blooms the Rose Within”* (x7)

Reading: Hafez

*How did the rose ever open its heart and give to this world all of its beauty?  
It felt the encouragement of light against its being—  
otherwise, we all remain too frightened.*

SILENCE (5 minutes)

Chant: *“Place me as a Seal Upon your Heart”*

Gospel reading

*Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where he had raised Lazarus the dead man to life. Now Martha waited on them. Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus. Then Mary took a pound of costly perfume with genuine nard and anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair. And the whole house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.*

*Then Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, the disciple who would betray Jesus, remarked, "This perfume could have been sold for over three hundred silver coins and the money given to the poor."*

*But Jesus rebuked him saying, "Leave her alone. Was she not keeping it for the day of my burial? Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed all over the world, what she has done will be told in praise of her."*

A small bowl bell is rung.

## Anointing

Mary Magdalene and Jesus anoint one another

Chant: *Place me as a Seal upon your Heart* (x2)

"Mary Magdalene" holds up her bowl of oil up towards Jesus and says:

*Place me as a seal upon your heart,  
For love is as strong as death.*

As she says this, Jesus holds his bowl and anoints himself fully spaciouly, slowly - on his forehead and hands.

Jesus then holds his bowl of oil up towards Mary Magdalene and says:

*Place me as a seal upon your heart,  
For love is as strong as death.*

As he says these words, Mary Magdalene anoints himself fully spaciouly, slowly - on his forehead and hands.

## **We anoint one another**

*At this point we will automatically be transported to small break out groups. Please UNMUTE yourself.*

*One person names another person in the group and says:*

**[Name], place me as a seal upon your heart,  
for love is as strong as death.**

*Then the anointed person turns to the next member of the group and does the same, and so on until one by one all are anointed. (The person who was first to anoint is the last to be anointed, as if we were sitting in a circle)*

*When it is your turn to be anointed, please anoint yourself with your oil (or a hand gesture if no oil is to hand as if subtle oil). You may like to anoint yourself on your forehead and hands.*

*When the Anointing process complete please sit in an “Anointed Silence” until you are brought back to the main room, which will be in silence.*

## Conclusion

Reading from J. G. Bennett’s “Resurrection”

*Everyone who begins to study and know their own states is well aware that our experience is a constant dying and rebirth. We must not be frightened as we come to see this, although it really is a terrifying thing that we have no power to keep hold of our own life; that it has to be renewed or given back to us by something that does not come from ourselves.*

*But even when we do see the helplessness with which we fall into oblivion, at that moment when we are most trying to hold onto ourselves, we must learn to trust that there is something that calls us back, and will call us back. And if it calls us back from sleep at night. it will call us back from that other sleep into which we shall enter, the sleep of death.*

Chant: “**All shall be well**” (Julian of Norwich, Songs of Presence chant)

Final Reading from TS Eliot, “Little Gidding”

*And all shall be well and  
All manner of things shall be well  
When the tongues of flame are in-folded  
Into the crowned knot of fire  
And the fire and the rose are one.*

Large bell is struck three times.

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Adapted from Wednesday Vespers, Holy Week Liturgies  
The Episcopal House of Prayer  
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by Cynthia Bourgeault with Ward Bauman and Darlene Franz

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