**solidarity with Sisters Communal Prayer for Sunday, July 11, 2021  
*THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME***

Theme: We are Chosen -- Sent -- Empowered

**CHECK-IN (Betty)** and then Betty mutes everyone.

**(Marie will serve as the person who keeps things moving.)**

**WELCOME (Suzie)**

Welcome, everyone!

* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* Thanks to Sisters Jo’Ann De Quattro, Jennie Lechtenberg, and Marie McCarthy who prepared this communal prayer.
* Thanks to the people who will be reading and leading us in prayer today:

Betty Thompson, Suzie De Quattro, Cecilia Estrada, Joan Sklamm, Anne Regan, Bill Fanelli, Lynn Bufka, Jim De Quattro, Reggie Ott, Ann Jelen, Richard McGinnis, Maryann Dolan, Stu Sklamm, Jo’Ann DeQuattro, Mary Dolmage, and .Jennie Lechtenberg

If you’d like to read on future Sundays, please get in touch.

**SETTLING IN (Betty)**

Let our breath bring us into quiet so we can be attentive to each other and to the Spirit. Notice your breath as it goes in and out…. Let it slow and deepen… and slowly fill you with the peace of Christ. We begin with 3 deep breaths. One to be here… one to be together… and one to open ourselves to the movement of the Spirit among us.

Now Susan DeQuattro will lead us into our celebration.

**GREETING (Susan DeQuattro)**

Beloved Community, rejoice!The Spirit of Christ is alive in us! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**All:** Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**OPENING SONG:** Word of God by Bernadette Farrell

**Intro. to the opening song -- (Marie McCarthy)**

As we sing our opening Song today, Word of God, Notice the words. Let them live inside you: “Make us your **living sign** – vibrant, engaged, active.” **Recreate us** – that is change us, transform us – for **YOUR** purpose – not ours -- In **THIS** place and in **THIS** time– right here and right now -- with all of its ordinariness and particularity. Make us who you need and desire us to be.

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**Song - Word of God:** <https://youtu.be/rqj_ma5HQWQ> **(Betty:**

Verses 1, 2, 3 **show slide 1 & play audio)**

Word of God, renew your people,

Make us now your living sign.

Recreate us for your purpose

In this place and in this time.

2. Word of Hope and Word of healing

3. Word of Peace and Word of Justice

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Cecilia Estrada)**

We remember how the Spirit of our loving God poured into the disciples and enabled them to share the good news in ways that **everyone** could understand, across all divisions. Today we hope for the same experience: for joy in the Spirit, and for the capacity and the courage to share the Gospel. We believe that the Spirit will give us light for our next step. And now let us pray.

**GATHERING PRAYER (Joan Sklamm)**

Spirit of the Living God,

teach us how to be your community –

a living sign of love in our world.

Help us to see one another with your eyes of love

to recognize what is ours to do in the world.,

and to give ourselves over fully to the action of your love in our lives.

May we inquire, nudge, and challenge each other

to imagine what none of us could conceive alone.

Blessed be.

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME (Anne Regan and Bill Fanelli)**

The scriptures today call us to pay attention to the way in which each one of us is chosen, sent and empowered by the Spirit. Each of us, chosen, just as we are, with whatever gifts, talents, flaws and shortcomings we have. We are each chosen to be embodiments of the Living Word of God. We may find ourselves surprised at being chosen – just as Amos did. We may think we are not worthy – and we would be correct. We may not believe we are up to the task – and again, we are correct, if we are planning on going it alone - relying on our own strength.

We are sent out to be the Living Word of God. But to whom are we sent? How are we sent? and how are we planning to travel? We may make the mistake of thinking that the circumstances of our sending should be dramatic – we should be sent to foreign lands or unknown peoples, that there should be something unusual and out of the ordinary in all of it. In truth, the circumstances of our being sent are often quite ordinary and unremarkable. We are sent to be exactly where we are, with those who grace our lives, and to be the loving presence of the Holy One right in the midst of all the ordinariness.

And how shall we travel? The gospel today will admonish us to travel lightly – without extra baggage. And it will also be very clear that we should not go alone – “Jesus sent them out in pairs.” Without the support and companionship of the community, we simply won’t make it.

For a moment notice how you picture the disciples traveling – do you see them trudging along the road weary and worn? Do you see them serious and intent on the task at hand? Or perhaps, do you see them engaging in lively and playful conversation with each other and those they meet – laughing and singing as they go?

Being sent is one thing – how we engage the journey is another. Are we spreading joy to all whom we encounter?

And finally, we, like the disciples, are empowered – given strength through the Spirit and the community, to keep on keeping on, to be available and present as we are needed; to bring all of our gifts and our limitations to the table in the service of love; and to find that God can and will use all we have – every part of us – in the endeavor of bringing about the kindom.

*(Slight pause)*

**(Marie)**

Now Lynn Bufka will read from the book of the prophet Amos Following the silence, Jim DeQuattro [BACKUP: Bob Gallagher] will offer questions for our reflection. Feel free to stay with whatever question calls you.

**READING 1 A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Amos 7:12-15 (Lynn Bufka)**

Amaziah told Amos, “Go away, Seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there. Do your prophesying there. We want no more prophesying in Bethel. This is a royal sanctuary, the national Temple!”

Amos answered Amaziah: “I am no prophet. Nor am I a disciple of a prophet. I was a shepherd and gathered figs for food. But YHWH took me from herding the flock, and said to me, ‘Go prophesy to my people, Israel.’

**QUESTIONS / PROMPTS 1 Jim DeQuattro (Or Bob Gallagher)**

When have you experienced yourself being called, like Amos, out of your comfort zone to speak the Word of God? What was your reaction?

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Description automatically generated with low confidenceTo whom are you being sent today, and what is the word you are being called to speak?

**COMMUNAL SILENCE** **(Betty:** Share slide 2. time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

**Marie:** Now we invite you into a musical meditation as we listen to Psalm 85. Simply let the words and the music wash over you and notice what stirs in your heart.

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Description automatically generatedLet Me Taste Your Mercy Like Rain on my Face (PS. 85) by Rory Cooney, Gary Daigle & Theresa Donohoo (Betty – show slide 2, play video)**

**Link:** **<https://youtu.be/Etu_bouh4Ec>**

Let me taste your mercy like the rain on my face, here in my life.

Show me your peace. Let us see with our own eyes your day breaking bright.

Come O Morning, come, O light!

**Marie:** Now **Reggie Ott** will read from The Gospel of Mark Chapter 6

**READING 2** MK. 6: 7-13 **(Reggie Ott)**

Then Jesus summoned the Twelve and began to send them out in pairs, giving them authority over unclean spirits, and instructing them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff – no bread, no bag, no money in their belts. They were to wear sandals but, Jesus added “Do not take a spare tunic.”

And Jesus then said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you leave it, shake off the dust from the soles of your feet as a testimony against them.”

And so they set off, proclaiming repentance as they went. They cast out many demons, and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

*(Slight pause)*

**QUESTIONS / Prompts 2 (Jim De Quarttro)**

What unnecessary baggage am I carrying with me that interferes with my ability to be a healing presence in our world?

When and how have I known the power of God moving through me to heal another? How did this experience change me?

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**COMMUNAL SILENCE**  **(Betty:** Share slide 4, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

**Marie**  Ann Jelen will read excerpts from Sister Mary McGlone’s reflection for the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary time.

**READING 3 (Ann Jelen)**

Today's readings reflect on being chosen. The prophet Amos, a simple farmer. He never asked to be a prophet but that didn't exempt him from being sent to call king and clergy to live as they ought. For that, he suffered ridicule and rejection. We know well from the Gospels that Jesus chose the disciples, not vice versa, and the more we study their lives, the more we wonder why he chose such fallible folk to carry on the mission. ….Today’s readings invite us to a mid-summer reflection on who we are and where we are going.

….the Gospel calls us back to the simplicity of discipleship. Mark's rendition of Jesus' sending the twelve out to preach is starkly short. With detailed instructions about how to dress and what not to pack, Mark seems to pay more attention to their traveling conditions than to how they were to carry out the mission, or what they were to say. Mark's essential point is that Jesus gave the disciples power and authority, and that is precisely what makes sense of the directive that they should travel with nothing but a walking stick and sandals — indispensable equipment for going the distance. They were to go out as Jesus did, vulnerable and dependent on those willing to receive their message.

Like ….Jesus' disciples, we too are chosen, not because of our talent or achievements, but because we are willing to be here to answer the call. Those are the qualifications required. Knowing that can humble us enough to make us the kind of servants the world needs today. In order to be able to carry the message to others, we first have to …bask in the wondrous warmth of God's love for us. Jesus' awareness of God's love formed the basis of all authority, and that is what is shared with us. We can preach Jesus' style of metanoia only when we are motivated by awareness of God's love for us.

The fact of our baptism tells us who we are, as God's chosen ones. Awareness of God's love not only tells us where we are going, but gives us the authority to reach out to others who need to experience that love and eventually even hear an explanation of it. We're not simply chosen; like the first disciples, we're empowered.

*(Slight pause)*

**QUESTIONS 3 (Jim De Quattro)**

When have I experienced myself empowered by the Holy One in ways I never imagined? How did that make me feel? How did that empower me to act?

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**COMMUNAL SILENCE**  **(Betty:** Share slide 5, time 2:00, chime, stop slide.**)**

**Marie** Richard McGinniswill now lead our sharing.

**SHARING (Richard McGinnis)**

We invite you to briefly share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you listened and as you reflected on these readings. That helps us to glimpse the many ways God is among us. We welcome new voices, and we also know that the wisdom of this community includes both words shared and silent listening,

As you share your feelings, please use "I” or “me". And let's leave a breath of silence between speakers. A bridge of silence allows us to take in what was just said, and let it influence what we may want to share.

So let’s begin in silence as we gather our reflections. [Long pause.]

Please unmute yourself to speak, and mute again afterwards.

Who would like to begin our sharing?

(Sharing)

Thank you.

Now Maryann Dolan will lead us in prayer.

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY (Maryann Dolan)**

We know that God alone is enough for us. At the same time, we have heard Paul say: “if there is anything you need, pray for it.” So now we bring what is in our hearts to God. Our response will be: **Holy One, hear our prayer.**

Loving God, you have called, chosen, and empowered each of us to be living signs of your love in our world. May we respond generously to that call and help to create a just and loving society, we pray, Holy One, hear our prayer.

Loving God, strengthen all women religious, especially the members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Recreate them for your purpose in this place and in this time. We pray, Holy One hear our prayer.

Loving God, heal the divisions in our world. Help us all to learn to work together for a just and equitable society. Help us to bring about your beloved community in our world, we pray. Holy One hear our prayer.

Now let’s remember the feelings and prayers that arose in us as we shared reflections, and also the prayers we carry with us. *[Pause.]*

Now, for what else shall we pray? Please remember to unmute yourself and end your petition with “For this we pray.”

(People speak.)

Thank you.

O God, we give you all our prayers, spoken and unspoken. We will do all that we can to put our prayers into action – while entrusting the outcome to you. Blessed be.

**OFFERTORY (Stu Sklamm)**

In these weeks and months of ordinary time, we celebrate the amazing fact that the Holy One is with us and lives in us now and at every moment. And so we offer ourselves to God in gratitude for having been chosen, just as we are, to be God’s Living sign in our world. Is there an old or new call that I will live out during the coming week? *[Pause.]*

Let us pray. Generous God, Creative Spirit, we commit to sharing our time, talents, and treasures so that we may be a light and a witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ. Blessed be.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Jo’Ann De Quatrro)**

O Great Love, we are humbled and emboldened

to know that you trust us to be your body in this world.

We are part of that body as we let go of all that separates us from you,

and as we embrace one another and your entire creation with merciful love.

We give you thanks for your presence in and among us. [Pause.]

We remember the night before Jesus died.

At dinner with friends, Jesus knew all that would soon be asked of them,

and, loving them to the end, Jesus showed them how to care for each other

as they went out into the world.

First Jesus washed their feet

and said, “… as I have done for you, you should also do.”

Then he looked at what was in front of them, the bread and the cup,

gifts of the earth and work of human hands, and blessed them.

So let us, too, invite God right now into what is front and center in our lives

knowing that God will indeed enter what we offer – and bless it. [Pause.]

Let us invite God into ourselves so that we become God’s living presence in our world. [Pause.]

Holy One, you transform us as you nourish us here.

May we nourish others with your presence.

Blessed be.

**OUR FATHER (Mary Dolmage)**

Now let us join our hearts as if we could join our hands to pray in harmony with Christians throughout the world in the words that Jesus gave us:

***All (muted):***

Our Mother/Father, God, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kindom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,

and do not let us fall into temptation, but deliver us from evil

for the kindom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Blessed be.

**FINAL BLESSING (Jennie Lechtenberg)**

Broken, we have gathered;

Nourished, let us now reach out.

May our steps lead us to paths of service,

Our words, to the healing of troubled hearts,

Our touch, to the embrace of compassion.

Our hearts, to perform random acts of kindness.

Now let us now go forth in peace:

in communion with each other

and offer communion to a hungry world. Blessed be.

**CLOSING SONG: Alleluia, Raise the Gospel** by Bernadette Farrell and Owen Alstott

Verses 1, 2, 3

**Marie** Now let us join is singing our closing song:

**Betty**: Play <https://youtu.be/FWELjpABkj8>

Alleluia, alleluia, Raise the Gospel over the Earth.  
Alleluia, alleluia, Peace and justice bringing to birth.

