**Solidarity with Sisters Communal Prayer for Sunday, June 28, 2020**

“Separately and together, we must make God’s gospel visible.”

(Sister [Joan Chittister](http://www.joanchittister.org/articles/let-call-be-heard))

**TECHNICAL CHECK-IN (Betty)**

I’m Betty Thompson and I welcome you here on behalf of Solidarity with Sisters.

* We sent the files of readings, responses, and lyrics.
* Camera: turn on if you want. Gallery view option.
* Mute/Unmute: know how? Needed even during singing.
* I will now mute everybody. Unmute to speak.

Now let’s put technical things aside.

**WELCOME (Suzie)**

Welcome, everyone!

* Introductions – people who haven’t been here before?
* This week Betty and I prepared our readings and prayers.
* Thanks to Stu Sklamm and Reggie Ott for leading us in music.
* Thanks to our readers today – Donna and Bill Ellerman, Peggy Thompson, and Mary Ott.
* If you’d like to read in future Sundays or prepare a future Sunday liturgy, just get in touch.

**SETTLING IN (Betty)**

Let’s move from getting here to being here. Settle into a comfortable position. Feel if there is any tightness in your body and let your muscles loosen. Notice your breath as it goes in and out. As you exhale, let tensions leave you. As you inhale, feel God’s love flowing into you. And now let’s take 3 deep breaths. One to be here… one to be together….and one to create space for how God will lead us today.

Now Stu Sklamm will lead us into our celebration.

**OPENING MUSIC – SEQUENCE FOR PENTECOST (Stu Sklamm)**

Holy Spirit, Lord Divine,

Come from Heights and Heav'n shine,

Come in blessed radiance bright!

Come, O Father of the poor,

Come whose treasured gifts endure,

Come, our heart's unfailing light!

O Consoler, wisest, best,

And our soul's most welcome guest,

Sweet refreshment, sweet repose.

In our labor, rest most sweet,

Pleasant coolness in the heat,

Consolation in our woes!

**GREETING (Betty)**

Sisters and brothers, rejoice!The Spirit of Christ is among us! Alleluia!

**All:** And all God’s people reply: Amen! Alleluia!

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Betty)**

We come together today because it is with each other that we experience ourselves as the people of God and the body of Christ. We gather to remember that God is in love with us. Jesus promises us that wherever two or three are gathered in his name, Jesus himself is right here in the midst of us. In this extraordinary time we are called to Pentecost clarity and action. We are called to make God’s Gospel visible in more ways and in more places. We are here together this morning to say yes to this call, and to find light for our next step. And now let us pray.

**GATHERING PRAYER (Betty)**

O God who creates and who gives breath,

be with us now as we come to you

with the great longings of our world

and of our selves.

We come together

trusting that the Spirit will be at work in us.

Help us to let go and to let come.

Help us to live the questions

and to move with you, in you, and toward you,

ever open to what is waiting to be born in us.

Amen.

**INTRODUCTION TO THEME (Suzie)**

As we said in our email, today we will be reflecting together on the gifts of the spirit.

Throughout the seasons of Easter and Pentecost we have explored how the early church moved from fear in the Upper Room, to the streets of Jerusalem and beyond.  We heard that the disciples received the Holy Spirit as both breath and fire.  And we have prayed weekly  “to create a space for the new to emerge.”

This week we will look at the gifts God provides for us to create that space and do that work.  Those of you who remember your catechism know these gifts are called wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord.

Let’s remember several things as we explore these gifts of the Spirit.

* Our primary calling is to love one another.
* Each of us has been given at least one gift.  We may have several but none of us has all of them.
* Discerning our individual gifts is both a first step and an ongoing process as we evolve over time.
* All gifts are equally important in making up the Body of Christ.
* We are called to use our gifts for the good of the community. They are not for our personal edification.
* These gifts are given to us so we can make the Gospel visible. Our gifts allow us to be the hands and feet of Christ, to be bread for the world, to be Eucharist.

Sister Mary McGlone points out that Paul is saying that every gift, every call to serve, every advance in the reign of God is a work of God. We don’t decide who gets what; we can only choose how to use what we are given.

Father Richard Rohr reminds us that “this ultimate self God wills us to be, is not a predetermined, static mold to which we must conform. Rather, it is an infinite possibility of growth. It is our true self.”

And it is from this true self that we both name and nurture our gifts, and are called into the world.

Our scripture readings for today come from the 12th chapter of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. We divided the reading into two parts. Jim De Quattro will offer questions for silent reflection after each reading. feel you have to answer all questions. To stay with only one of them might lead you into a deeper place.

Now Bill Ellerman will read from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

**READING 1: 1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-8, 11 (Bill Ellerman)**

About the gifts of the Spirit, sisters and brothers, I want you to be quite certain.

There are many different gifts, but it is always the same Spirit;

there are many different ways of serving, but it is always the same Lord.

There are many different forms of activity, but in everybody it is the same God who is at work in them all.

The particular manifestation of the Spirit granted to each one is to be used for the general good.

To one may be given the gift of wisdom, to others gifts of knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing spirits, speaking in different tongues, or the interpretation of tongues.

But at work in all these is one and the same Spirit, distributing gifts at will to each individual.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Jim De Quattro)**

Fr. Ron Rolheiser calls the gifts of the spirit “the particular manifestation of the spirit, granted to each of us.” He says “We need to pray for such a particularized Pentecost to happen.” Consider what a particularized personal Pentecost might be for you. It’s like naming the tongue of fire over your own particular head, the spark of God that is alight in you in order to brighten the world. What part of God wants to shine out through you?

When your gifts show up in your life, you might react in different ways, like delight or surprise or even fear. How have you reacted at the way your gifts have shown themselves?

**SILENCE (Sound a chime after 2 minutes) (Betty)**

**Betty:** Now Donna Ellerman will continue reading from Corinthians.

**READING 2: 1 Corinthians 12:12, 17, 19-24, 26-27, 13:2. (Donna Ellerman)**

For as with the human body, which is a unity although it has many parts, so it is with Christ.

If your whole body was just one eye, how would you hear anything? If it was just one ear, how would you smell anything? If all the parts were the same, how could it be a body?

The parts are many but the body is one. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I do not need you’, nor can the head say to the feet, ‘I do not need you’.

What is more, it is precisely the parts of the body that seem to be the weakest which are the indispensable ones. It is the parts of the body which we consider least dignified that we surround with the greatest dignity; and our less presentable parts are given greater presentability.

God has composed the body so that each part may be equally concerned for all the others. If one part is hurt, all the parts share its pain. And if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.

Sisters and brothers, now Christ's body is yourselves, each of you with a part to play in the whole.

But without LOVE, then you are nothing at all.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Jim)**

To make the Gospel visible, we are called to use our own gifts and also to honor and cooperate with the gifts of others, because only *together* can we be the body of Christ in the world. When is it challenging for you to find the balance between using your own gift and cooperating with the gifts of others?

There are people who have been marginalized and blocked from using their gifts because of racism and other kinds of injustice or unequal starting positions. What is my response when I see that happening?

**SILENCE (Sound a chime after 2 minutes) (Betty)**

**Betty:** Now Peggy Thompson will read a reflection that draws from multiple sources.

**READING 3: Reflection drawn from** [**Martha Graham**](https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/680327-there-is-a-vitality-a-life-force-a-quickening-that)**, Fr.** [**Ron Rolheiser**](https://www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser/photos/a.228362604007230/474035529439935/?type=3&theater)**, Fr.** [**Richard Rohr**](https://cac.org/whole-holy-together-2016-04-08/)**, and Sister** [**Mary McGlone**](https://www.ncronline.org/news/spirituality/scripture-life/pentecost-sunday) **(Peggy Thompson)**

What do we mean by “gifts of the spirit” and why does understanding and naming them matter? Four writers suggest complementary ways of answering those questions: that our gifts are unique, that they are our charism, and that they enhance our diversity .

Martha Graham writes: “There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and it will be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is nor how valuable nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours, clearly and directly, to keep the channel open. You do not even have to believe in yourself or your work. You have to keep yourself open.”

Fr. Ron Rolheiser calls us "to pray for a particularized Pentecost” when we recognize “the particular manifestation of the spirit, granted to each of us.” ~~S~~ome gifts of the Spirit that we might notice are administration, artistry, hospitality, encouragement, generosity, mercy, promoting justice, prayer, courage, teaching, empathy, clarity, or communicating.

Fr. Richard Rohr reminds us that our gift is personal, our own “little part of the beauty” of God. given for us to manifest love. He writes that “Paul’s word for this is a ‘charism’—a gift that is given to you not just for your own self, but to build up the community, to build up the society. As an individual, you don’t have the full responsibility of putting it all together. All you have to do is discover your one gift and use it for the good of all.”

Rohr continues: “So we, in our corporate wholeness, are the glory of God, the goodness of God, the presence of God. As an individual, I participate in that wholeness, and that is holiness. That’s the only holiness we’ll ever know. It’s not my private holiness; it’s our connectedness together.… The individual cannot carry such glory and greatness alone.”

Sister Mary McGlone reminds us that Paul was writing to a church in conflict. “Although it may seem counterintuitive, Paul called the community to build their unity by enhancing their diversity. When each side assumes that their truth is the only truth, they are claiming ownership of the Holy Spirit rather than stewardship of the Spirit’s gifts. When each group learns to humbly recognize that the Spirit’s gifts are given them for the good of the whole, they can learn to play their part in furthering God’s work in their world. The community born out of Pentecost must cultivate what Pope Francis calls ‘the arduous art of reconciliation,’ an art which requires grace and the support of a community~~.~~

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS (Jim)**

Our gifts are given to make the gospel visible. Think of communities that you are or have been part of. How does being part of a community influence how you use your gift? Where might that be hard? How do you get stuck?

What helps you to be open to the particular gifts of the Spirit in those with whom you disagree, for example, in the church or in your family?

**SILENCE (Sound a chime after 2 minutes.) (Betty)**

**SHARING (Betty)**

We invite you to briefly share what emerged in **your** heart this morning as you listened and as you reflected on these readings. Everyone’s individual reflections help us to glimpse the many ways God is among us.

If you would like to speak, you will need to unmute yourself on your phone or in Zoom. After you speak, please mute yourself again. If more than one person speaks at once, one will go first and the other will speak after that.

Who would like to begin our sharing?

(Sharing)

Thank you.

Now Mary Ott will lead us in prayer.

**INTENTION (Mary Ott)**

O God of all gifts, the scriptures today proclaim that you pour your Spirit into us, giving us gifts that are especially powerful when we use them together. We ask you to help us in knowing and using our gifts as one community in Christ. And we ask you to be with us in the hopes and needs we bring to you now.

Our response will be, “Holy One, hear our prayer.”

God within us, help us to recognize and claim the gifts of the Spirit you have given us. For this we pray. Holy One, hear our prayer.

God among us, help us to strengthen and cooperate with one another’s gifs so that together we make the Gospel visible, in solidarity with all who are most vulnerable, and with Earth itself. For this we pray. Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of all, give our country unselfish courage to choose liberty, justice, and compassion for all, and give us wisdom as we elect our leaders. For this we pray. Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of love, pour your power into Catholic sisters and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in their work and in their communities. For this we pray. Holy One, hear our prayer.

God of every day, abide with us and with those we love and those we serve. For this 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 unmute yourself as you speak. Please end your petition with “for this we pray.”

(People speak.)

Thank you.

We place all of our prayers, those spoken and those unspoken, into your loving care, and we entrust the outcome to you. As we do, we use the words of Sister Sharlet Wagner. We thank you, God, that “It is not ours to see the future. Our task is not to create a plan for the new to emerge. It is to create a space for the new to emerge. For the young. For the growing diversities. A space where the Holy Spirit is free to work. If we can do this, the future will emerge. And it will be good.” Amen.

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION (Betty)**

O Great Love, we are humbled and emboldened

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

We offer you our lives. We give you thanks for your love. [Pause.]

We remember the night before Jesus died.

Jesus, who was having dinner with his friends,

looked at what was in front of him, the bread and the cup,

and he 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.]

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

May we nourish others with your presence.

Amen.

**OUR FATHER (Suzie)**

Now let us pray in harmony with all Christians throughout the world in the words that Jesus gave us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy 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 lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

for the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**FINAL BLESSING (Suzie)**

Let us ask God’s blessing on each other as we now go forth in peace:

**All:** May the Lord bless us and keep us.

May the Lord shine his light upon us.

May the Lord be gracious to us

and give us peace. Amen.

**CLOSING SONG: SING A NEW CHURCH (Reggie Ott)** -

**VERSES 1, 3, AND 4**



