**Solidarity with Sisters’ Communal Contemplative Prayer – Oct. 20-21, 2020**

**GATHERING**



Loving God, we come here now to know you

alive in us.

Help us to let go and to let come.

Help us to live the questions.

Help us to settle into your presence with quiet openness.

Amen.

Feel the comfort of your chair and relax into it… and relax into God’s love for you. Let your breath deepen and quiet. Notice your body and any tension you may be carrying. You may want to tighten as you inhale and relax as you exhale—your head and jaw and neck, shoulders arms and hands, stomach, hips, legs and feet. If distractions come, let them slide away.

Notice your breath. Take a deep breath, hold for a moment, and slowly exhale. Again. Feel your chest and stomach rise and fall as you gently breathe… Know the Spirit is moving in you gently and easily. Take 3 gentle breaths. One to be here… one to be together….and one to carry you into 10 minutes of silence in God.

**(10 minutes of silence)**

Now a poem by Wendell Berry will carry us into 20 minutes of silence with God:

No, no, there is no going back.  
Less and less you are  
that possibility you were.  
More and more you have become  
those lives and deaths  
that have belonged to you.  
You have become a sort of grave  
containing much that was  
and is no more in time, beloved  
then, now, and always.  
And so you have become a sort of tree  
standing over a grave.  
Now more than ever you can be  
generous toward each day  
that comes, young, to disappear  
forever, and yet remain  
unaging in the mind.  
Every day you have less reason  
not to give yourself away.

**(20 minutes of silence)**

**PRAYERS**

Let’s come back together… Let us take a moment to let our experience in silence take a shape we can hold onto….. Let us invite each other to share the prayers that arise in us now.

(Shared prayers – “Holy One, hear our prayer.”)

We know that we are not going back to what was. We know how Catholic sisters and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious steadily face that fact. We ask for the courage and grace to walk forward together, and to help each other in forging a new path. For this we pray. Holy One, hear our prayer.

**CLOSING**

O Great Love, we place all of our prayers, those spoken and those unspoken, into your care. We entrust the outcome to you, and we offer you our hearts, our minds, and our wills in service of that outcome, even if it’s not what we had in mind. And so together we pray: Come, Holy Spirit. fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.

**SIGN OF PEACE**