

WOMEN OF HOPE PRAYER SERVICE

Greeting: In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Leader: To our God who shares divinity with us. To our God who unsettles and inspires us.

All: Let us give praise and thanks. Amen.

LET US PRAY:

Left: O God of the entire universe, we praise and thank you for all the good gifts that you have given us and especially for the gift of light to see with hope- filled eyes.

Right: We ask that you will renew our sight, so that we may envision a new heaven and a new earth, a world in which all women and men will work together joyfully in cooperation and love.

Left: These are new and challenging times in the Church and in the world. Give us wisdom so that we may be always conscious of tradition yet open to the new ways in which the Spirit calls us.

Right: Guide us as we learn from the wisdom of each other. Give us a Spirit of trust so that we may more fully collaborate with our sisters and brothers.

Left: May our lives be those of priestly people, a people who are filled with hope because of your presence in our midst, a people who recognize that it is in serving each other that we serve you.

Right: We ask you all these favors because you are the giver of life and light, the one who enlightens our vision, touches it with wisdom, and gives it strength and brilliance.

Introduction to Scripture Reading

Scripture: Romans 8:24-28

All: Thanks be to God.

Litany of Hope

(After the leader reads the entire line, *the assembly repeats the part in italics*).

Blessed be Eve, *the first woman of our tradition*, whose very life gives us a lesson in hope for the future of humanity.

Blessed be Sarah, *partner of Abraham*, whose ability to remain open to laughter, love, and the miracle of creation gave her a son in her old age.

Blessed be Mary, *the Mother of God and our Mother*, who knew pain and humiliation yet never lost faith.

Blessed be Priscilla, *collaborator with Paul*, whose faith and hope enabled him to minister.

Blessed be Teresa of Avila, *doctor of the Church*, whose experience of the awareness of God teaches all generations the value of prayer in times of doubt.

Blessed be Dorothy Day, *cofounder of the Catholic Worker Movement*, who has given hope and witness to the Church of the poor and the oppressed.

Blessed Be *women religious, vowed celibates*, who have served the church tirelessly through all the ages and have never lost faith.

Blessed be *single women, mothers to many*, who by their unique call offer time and talents to all God's family.

Blessed be *wives and mothers*, who have nurtured children and families in a spirit of joy, hope, and self-giving.

Blessed be *widows*, who in sorrow and loss are signs of fidelity, strength, and perseverance.

Blessed be *poor women and women who are abused or oppressed*, for they give to all of us a lesson in determination and hope.

Let us Pray:

Leader: Creator God, you who have given us these strong yet gentle women, help us to draw strength from their lives so that we may be ever faithful. Help us to embrace a life of mercy and compassion as we rejoice in the hope of the promises made by your Son, Jesus. Living in joyful hope for the coming of the Lord, we go forth in the peace of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

CANDLE CEREMONY

Candles have been distributed to each on the tables. The leader lights her candle, passes the light to the next person, and so on until all candles are lighted. Hold lighted candles during the closing hymn.

PEOPLE OF PEACE

Refrain: To be people of faith in times of doubt;
to be people of hope in times of despair;
to be people of peace, people of peace,
O lord, your instruments of peace.

Where we encounter hatred, let us bring your love,
where hurt has been oppressive, your healing care;
wherever there are people who need to be free;
make your church an instrument of peace.

Refrain

To heal the broken hearted, to comfort those who mourn;
to go to those imprisoned, bring freedom to the bound;
to be a light for all who struggle to be free;
make your church an instrument of peace.

Refrain

In giving to the hungry, in satisfying thirst;
in welcoming the stranger, in comforting the ill;
in being those who hunger for justice and for truth;
make us all your instruments of peace.

Refrain

Please extinguish your candles.

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